# WILD LIFE UNDER THE EQUATOR

PAUL DU CHAILLU

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UNDER WAY IN AFRICA.

# WILD LIFE

# UNDER THE EQUATOR

NARRATED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

By PAUL DU CHAILLU,

AUTHOR OF

"DISCOVERIES IN EQUATORIAL AFRICA," "STORIES OF THE GORILLA COUNTRY," ETC.

*WITH NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS.*

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# CONTENTS.

PRELIMINARY CHAPTER.....Page 13

CHAPTER II.

Parrot Island.—How the Parrots build their Nests.—Parrot Soup..... 15

CHAPTER III.

An African Creek.— A Leopard among the Chickens.— A night Watch for Leopards..... 25

CHAPTER IV.

Hunting Elephants and Buffaloes.— A venomous Serpent.— A Snake-charmer.—He is bitten.—He commits Suicide..... 34

CHAPTER V.

At Court in Africa.— Costumes of the Court.— An African Household.—A false Alarm..... 44

CHAPTER VI.

Hunt for Gorillas.— A large one shot.— The Negroes make Charms of his Brain.—Mourning in a Bakalai Town..... 50

CHAPTER VII.

An African Fireside.— A Camp by the Sea-shore.— The first Gorilla Hunter. — Negro Blarney..... 61

CHAPTER VIII.

Hippopotamus hunting.— We kill one.— The Men eat it.— Poor Beef.— What the Tusks are for..... .....Page 69

CHAPTER IX.

A great Gorilla..... 75

CHAPTER X.

Death in an African Village.— Lamentations.— The Funeral Ceremonies. — An African Cemetery..... 82

CHAPTER XI.

A Tornado.—Before the Storm.— Thunder and Lightning.— After the Storm..... 87

CHAPTER XII.

A Creek infested by Snakes.—Snake in the Boat.—An ugly Visitor... 93

CHAPTER XIII.

Drinking the Mboundou.—How Olanga-Condo could do it.—How the Mboundou is made.—The Effect of the Poison..... 101

CHAPTER XIV.

A royal Feast.—On the Banks of the Ovenga.—Preparations.—The Bill of Fare.—A taste of Elephant and a mouthful of Monkey..... 108

CHAPTER XV.

The terrible Bashikouay. — March of an ant Army. — They build Bridges.—They enter Houses.—Their Habits..... 114

CHAPTER XVI.

The Sorrows of the Birds.—Curious African Birds.—The Barbatula du Chaillui.—The Barbatula Fuliginosa.— The Sycobius Nigerrimus..... 125

CHAPTER XVII.

On the Ofoubou River.—Elephants bathing.—Pursuit through the Swamp.— Escape of the Elephants.....Page 138

CHAPTER XVIII.

Njali-Coudié.—An African Town.—The Chief.—Courtship and Marriage in Africa.— Buying a Wife.— Quarrel over the Spoils..... 145

CHAPTER XIX.

The Feast of Njambai.—The talking Idol.—Secret Proceedings.— The Women and their Mysteries..... 150

CHAPTER XX.

Sick in a strange Land.—Adventure with a Snake.—How a Squirrel was charmed..... 157

CHAPTER XXI.

Witchcraft.—Accusation of Pendé.—Result of his Trial..... 163

CHAPTER XXII.

Gorilla hunting.—Preparations.—We kill a male Gorilla.—Bringing him to Camp..... 169

CHAPTER XXIII.

In the Buffalo Country.— The Paradise of Flies.— The various Species..... 177

CHAPTER XXIV.

Elephant Pits.— A Captive. — Dividing the Meat.— The Alethe Castanea..... 183

CHAPTER XXV.

A deserted Village.—Fear of Death.—Wars between Villages.— African wild Boar.—The Hunt..... 189

## CHAPTER XXVI.

In the wild Forest.—Hostile Tribes.—An intrenched Camp.—Forays for Provisions.....Page 197

## CHAPTER XXVII.

We discover human Foot-prints.—We spy out the Enemy.—A female Gorilla.—Maternal Fondness..... 208

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

How we were received at Camp.—Threatened with Starvation.—A Night in Camp.—Malaouen's Story..... 215

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| Under Way in Africa | *Frontispiece.* |
| Parrot Island | 21 |
| An African War Dance | 27 |
| Encounter With a Leopard | 30 |
| Lying Low for Elephants | 35 |
| The Snake Charmer | 41 |
| Appearance of the King and his Court | 45 |
| Fierce Attack of a Gorilla | 55 |
| Evening Amusements in Africa | 62 |
| Hunting Hippopotami | 71 |
| Head of Hippopotamus | 74 |
| Foot-prints of the Gorilla | 76 |
| Female Gorilla and her Young | 79 |
| Mourning the Dead | 84 |
| A Night Storm in Africa | 89 |
| In the Creek of Snakes | 95 |
| Drinking the Mboundou | 103 |
| March of Bashikouay Ants | 119 |
| The Bashikouay Ant, Magnified to twice its Natural Size | 123 |
| The Barbatula Working | 131 |
| African Hanging Birds'-nests | 133 |
| Hunting Elephants | 143 |
| Interior of the Njambai-house | 154 |
| Charming the Squirrel | 161 |
| The Trial of Pendé | 165 |
| Death of a Male Gorilla | 173 |
| Dancing Around the Elephant Meat | 186 |

PAGE
KILLING FOUR WILD BOARS..... 195
SMOKING OUT THE BEES..... 204
TRAPPING THE MONKEY..... 206
WE DISCOVER FOOT-PRINTS..... 209
ARRIVAL AT THE STOCKADE..... 217
GOOD-BYE TO THE BAKALAIS..... 227

# WILD LIFE UNDER THE EQUATOR.

## PRELIMINARY CHAPTER.

DEAR young folks!—In the book I wrote for you last *year*, called "Stories of the Gorilla country," I said to you "*au revoir:*" that means good-bye till I come again.

I have come again to my publishers, who are also my good friends, and who have let me have my own way about the illustrations of this book; they have told me that you were pleased with the last book. Not only have they told me so, but many of you have said the same thing to me.

This was good news, for I delight to tell stories to young folks, and "Stories of the Gorilla Country" being the first book I ever wrote for you, I was delighted to hear of its success.

I felt quite happy when I learned that I had been able to interest you in what interested me, while travelling in far-distant countries.

I have taken my pen once more. I am going to lead you into the great forest of Equatorial Africa. I am

going to try to make you travel with me in the wild country I have explored. I am going to bring you face to face with the gorilla, and lead you into the midst of the wild tribes of men I have discovered. I will tell you how they live, what queer superstitions they have, and what sort of people these poor savages are.

I shall tell you about snakes, leopards, elephants, hippopotami, and other wild beasts of the forest. About insects, wonderful ants, and many other curious things.

You will follow me in that great jungle; you will get lost in it; you will build your camp with me, and you will hunt with me; you will be hungry with me; you will have the flies to plague you; you will have lots of adventures, and perhaps when you close this book you will shout, "What a glorious time we have had with our friend Paul!" I hope you will not only be amused, but that you will be also instructed.

I have written two large volumes—"Explorations in Equatorial Africa" and "Journey to Ashango Land"—for older people than yourselves, and I do not see why I should not write for young folks. Now let me lead you into that land of wonders, where no civilized man had ever trodden before me.

## CHAPTER II.

PARROT ISLAND.—HOW THE PARROTS BUILD THEIR NESTS.—PARROT SOUP.

THERE is an Island by the sea, in a far country, called Nengue Ngozo.

I shall always remember that Island; for when I went there I was young and wild—as wild as the waves of that sea. I had no mother to care for me; I had no sister to love me when I came to this Island. The wide world was before me. But I loved to roam in wild and distant countries; I loved to look upon and study the men, the beasts, the birds, the fishes, the insects, and the trees. I had no one with me, but God was kind to me, and took care of me, and he has now brought me back safely, so that I might tell you all I have seen.

On Nengue Ngozo there was a little village. That village had a King, who instead of a crown wore a woolen cap, and for a sceptre he had a cane.

Indeed, the Island of Nengue Ngozo, which means Parrot Island, is a little kingdom of itself. It is covered with forest, and is situated in the estuary called the Gaboon, formed in the bight of Guinea, on the west coast of Africa, some fifteen or sixteen miles north of the equator, and a few miles from the sea. Not far from it there is another Island called Konikey. (Both of these

islands are marked in the map published in my work called "Explorations in Equatorial Africa.")

One part of Nengue Ngozo is tolerably high, the other part is low and swampy. It is covered with a great forest; some of the trees are very large and tall, and the foliage of the palm-trees is very beautiful.

The Island is but a few miles in circumference.

The people of this Island are safe from wild beasts, as there are no leopards to carry them away or kill their goats, no elephants to destroy their plantations, and no gorillas to roam about and frighten them. The cries of the chimpanzee are not heard, the wild buffalo is not to be seen, the graceful antelopes and gazelles are unknown, and the chatter of monkeys does not fall upon the ear of the people or resound strangely in the woods. But all these roam at leisure on the main-land, where the villages of the warlike Shekiani and Bakalai people are scattered over the great, wild forest.

As I looked upon the water I could see the majestic pelican chasing the fishes, and the gulls flying in great numbers through the air, their shrill cries sounding strangely in the midst of the grand solitude by which I was surrounded.

Cranes and other birds were walking to and fro on the beach in search of their food. How quiet, silent and sly they were as they stepped from place to place looking for their prey; and, when they saw it, how quickly their long beaks dipped into the water to seize it!

It was a very warm day when I landed on Nengue Ngozo. The rays of the sun were powerful, and there was not a ripple on the water. It was so hot that my men had not even strength to paddle. Our sail, made

of natives' mats, flapped against the mast and was not of the slightest use except to fan us. Happily the tide carried us toward the Island. I had an umbrella over my head, and now and then I wetted a handkerchief which was in my hat to keep my head cool. I felt that I was as red as a boiled lobster. I remember well how much I suffered from the heat that day.

Now and then we could see the fins of sharks as they came near our canoe, and a shudder went through us all, for we knew well what would become of us if by some misfortune we were to upset.

A few days before a fine boy had been devoured by these monsters. The sight of a shark when I am in a canoe always makes me shudder. I fear a shark more than I do snakes. Which is saying a great deal!

How glad I was when I landed and rested myself under the shade of the forest which grew to the very water's edge. I quenched my thirst in a little brook which rose in the interior of the Island, and oh! how much better I felt afterward. I had to drink out of a large leaf which I folded in the form of a cornucopia.

I saw on the sands what I knew to be the foot-prints of men; we followed them and at last came to the very small village of which I have spoken to you. The men with me were Mpongwes, and belonged to the same tribe as the people of the Island.

The King and his people at first stared at me, but a word or two from my men made every thing right.

The luggage was landed from our canoe, the canoe was then hauled on to the main-land and put under the shade of the trees, and we were ready to rest, for we were all very tired and I felt rather feverish.

The wives of the King cooked food for us, and in the mean time huts had been given to us by his sable Majesty.

I hardly tasted the food that was presented to me. After my sham meal I fell asleep, and when I awoke the sun had set, and all was dark and silent. I felt better, however, and came out of my hut; the King was quietly smoking his pipe, and we had a chat together; the Queen came forth also; then a few old men of the place, whom we may call the gray-beards, made their appearance.

These people of course knew what the sea was, knew that the vessels sailed upon it to come to their country; but they asked me many questions about the white man's country. For instance:—

Had we men with only one eye in the middle of the forehead?

Did our babies feed on milk? They had heard they fed on spirits.

Of what material were our houses? Were they built with the bark of trees? And many other apparently foolish questions.

When I told them that we had no people with one eye in the middle of their foreheads they did not believe me. They had never seen any white man manufacturing before them the goods we brought, therefore they thought another species of men must make them, from whom we bought them.

At last, looking at my watch, I saw that it was ten o'clock: time to go to bed: so I bade good-night to the King and his people and went back to my hut. I barricaded myself; slept with my gun by my side, and for my pillow laid my head on my revolvers.

Toward three or four o'clock in the morning I was startled by a tremendous noise. At first, just waking up, I could not make out what it was; when lo! I discovered it was made by parrots, chattering away in a most jolly and discordant manner. I had never heard such a noise in my life before. The Island must have been full of them. I tried in vain to sleep—turned myself one way, then the other, but it was of no avail; the noise was so terrific there was no rest for me. I don't think a hundred bells tolling together could have made more noise. At any rate as they went on I wondered if they could understand each other, and how they could have come to the Island. They had probably arrived while I was asleep, just before sunset.

Before the morning twilight came I was out, and as soon as the dawn of day made its appearance, flock after flock flew from the trees and went in different directions toward the main-land. I followed them as far as my eyes could reach, but soon lost sight of them, for they were going far away, very far away. They were in flocks, and each flock went in search of places where they knew food was abundant. They went off by tens, by twenties, and by hundreds together.

By sunrise not a parrot was to be seen on the Island, and I could only hear the chatter of other birds. How silent then every thing seemed!

During the day I went to the top of the hill in search of land shells, and after five o'clock in the afternoon the parrots began to arrive again. From the top of the hill I could see them as far as my eyes could reach: they were coming from immense distances. They continued pouring in and pouring in, and I should not wonder if

some had come from thirty or forty miles, or perhaps even more. They came and they came, and they continued coming, even after the sun had set, and two flocks came when it was almost dark. These had probably come from far away and had miscalculated the time their flight would take; or perhaps they had been detained by some dainty fruit on the road. At any rate they came very late. I calculated that at least twenty thousand parrots had arrived on the Island, although there may have been one hundred thousand, for I do not claim to have counted them all. They came to spend the night on the Island of Nengue Ngozo, and I now ceased to wonder at the strange name the natives had given to the Island.

These gray parrots are said to live to be a hundred years old and even more. Some years ago I myself knew a sea-captain in New York by the name of Brown, an old trader on the African coast, who had a parrot which he had kept for thirty years. I wish you could have heard him talk and sing songs. Captain Brown is dead, and I know not where his widow has gone, but perhaps the parrot is still living. I could not help thinking that some of these old parrots had come here every day, perhaps, for a hundred years.

They perched by hundreds and perhaps thousands on the same trees, and the trees on which they perched showed their heads far above those of the other trees. How beautifully their gray plumage and their red tails contrasted with the green leaves from the midst of which they appeared! Some of the old ones were almost white. When old their feathers seem to be covered with a white powder, and if you pass your hand over their plumage

this powder comes off. I have killed wild ones perfectly splendid, much larger and handsomer than any I have seen tame.

I wondered why these parrots had chosen this Island as their bedroom. Why did they come from such distances every day when there were so many tall trees in the forest on the main-land? I found that it was because they were safer than on the main-land; there were no *genetta* (a kind of wild cat) to pounce upon them and disturb, or rather devour, them at night.

PARROT ISLAND.

Days passed, and every morning and every evening the parrots went away and the parrots came back, and between three and four o'clock in the morning began their *charming* noise; but I became quite accustomed to it and did not mind it at all after a while. I noticed also that

generally the same number that started together in the morning came back together.

These parrots must certainly be endowed with a very great instinct to know the way to the Island, as they come from great distances, and from every direction.

Not only do they come to the Island of Nengue Ngozo to sleep, but in the month of February and the beginning of March many remain and have their nests on the Island. They all would have had their nests, I am sure, if there had been hollows of trees enough for them.

These gray parrots do not build a regular nest, but choose a tree where there is a deep hollow to lay their eggs in. The nests are discovered by hearing their young calling all day long for their parents to feed them. I never saw more than two young ones in one nest, or hollow of a tree, and very funny they looked when covered with down before their feathers had grown.

What awful cries they utter as they see the human hand coming through the darkness ready to catch hold of them. And you had better look out for your fingers, for they bite terribly hard, I assure you, as I know by experience, and that in despite of their being very young. There were days when I hid myself near a tree close by the place where they came to sleep, but the parrots seemed to know it, and would fly round and round it, and then go away. It is but very seldom that I ever was able to approach parrots when they were perched on a tree standing by itself: they would fly away before I could come within gunshot distance. They are exceedingly shy.

When they approach their nests they always come in the most silent manner, not uttering a single cry.

For a while after they have taken their flight the young ones will follow their parents; after a while the birds of the same age flock together. A young gray parrot has entirely black eyes. Before he is a year old a change takes place: a ring shows itself round the black, which gradually turns yellow, then whitish-yellow. In the breeding season the natives capture a great many young ones in their nests before they can fly away.

After a few days the fowls of the little kingdom of Nengue Ngozo became scarce, and at last the King had no more to give me; so I said to myself, Why should not I kill some parrots and cook them?

One morning I awoke before daylight. Two evenings before I had watched a tree not far away where the parrots were roosting in great numbers, and had made a path leading to it. When I went by that path it was pitch dark; I could not help thinking of snakes, but at last I came to the foot of the tree. It was just before daybreak; the birds did not see me, but they seemed to mistrust something, for, though I had come very noiselessly, their chatter was of that kind which showed distinctly that they were disturbed.

At last I raised my gun in the direction of what I thought the midst of the tree; then I touched both triggers, and, *bang! bang!* I let go both barrels at the same time. The gun gave an awful recoil which almost knocked me down, and I heard a shower of parrots falling all round me; one fell right on the top of my head and nearly frightened the life out of me, for I fancied a snake had just tumbled on top of me, or that a bough of the tree was coming down.

What a terrific noise followed my two shots! I had

never heard any thing like it. They fled in dismay, screaming with all their might; but where were they to go? it was dark, and the whole population of parrots was in terrible trouble. The next evening not a parrot came upon that tree, and they were all very suspicious as they came to the Island, flying round and round the trees before they roosted.

When daylight came, I found twenty dead parrots on the ground, and had a grand feast. I had parrot soup, which was not at all bad; roasted parrot; and grilled parrot. The old parrots were very tough, but the young ones were excellent; their flesh was black and resembled in taste that of the pigeon.

Now I have told you all I know about Nengue Ngozo. Nengue, as I have said before, means an Island, and Ngozo, parrot. Should any one of you ever go to the Gaboon country he will find the Island, and he will see the parrots—unless the natives have cut down all the trees.

In that part of Africa there are only two kinds of parrots: the gray sort—which is very abundant, and much handsomer than the gray one found near Sierra Leone, the gray being of a lighter color—and the green one, which is very rare.

But I have one now in my possession, the only one I have ever seen which is extraordinary. It is pink and gray; that is, it has pink and gray feathers, and is a very beautiful bird, the rarest that was ever brought to America or Europe, and probably the only one of its kind that ever existed, for it is not a distinct species, but a freak of Nature.

## CHAPTER III.

AN AFRICAN CREEK.—A LEOPARD AMONG THE CHICKENS.—A NIGHT WATCH FOR LEOPARDS.

Now I had just left the Island of Nengue Ngozo, and if your eyes could have reached that part of the world, you might have seen me still in the same little canoe, made of the trunk of a single tree, armed to the teeth, making for the Ikoi Creek, which was not far distant. (This creek is also marked on my large map published in my work called "Explorations in Equatorial Africa.")

The canoe was going swiftly through the water, the wind was good, and soon after our departure we entered the creek. I felt anxious, for the Bakalai and Shekiani villages were at war with each other—a wild and treacherous set they are—and either tribe might have taken my canoe for that of their enemy, and so pounced upon us in great numbers and killed us all before we could let them know that we were strangers belonging to the Mpongwe tribe, their friends. I was watching continually to see if there were not some canoes in ambush. After a while the creek became narrower, the breeze ceased, the sail had to be furled along the mast, the men took to the paddles, and our canoe glided onward upon the waters of the Ikoi.

The sight was dismal enough: both banks were flanked with swampy forests of mangrove; the tide was low, and a prodigious number of oysters were seen on the roots of the mangrove-trees. As we came near them I took an axe and cut some of the roots, which were literally covered with oysters. We lit a fire at the bottom of the canoe and roasted these oysters, and they were excellent. I assure you it was quite a treat.

Feeling better after our meal, we paddled on again. The mangrove-trees became more scarce, and at last we came in sight of a village of Shekianis.

As soon as they saw us they met in great numbers on the top of the hill where the village stood, and I could hear their wild shouts of war. As we approached nearer their excitement increased; the war-drums beat, and I could see them brandishing their spears. My men sang songs in the Mpongwe language to show that we were not their enemies.

In the mean time I did not feel comfortable at all, and really thought that we might have a fight. I knew these Shekiani people to be funny fellows: if we had gone back, a dozen canoes armed with men would have been after us, for they would have immediately thought we were their enemies. So we pushed on, and at last came opposite the village. Here we had to stop to speak to them, and finally they entreated us to pass the night among them, the chief himself coming to beg us to stay.

As it was nearly night I concluded that it would be better to sleep in a village than in the woods, for there we might have been attacked unawares, the people not knowing who we were.

AN AFRICAN WAR DANCE

These Shekianis crowded round to see me, and at every move I made they all sent up wild shouts of astonishment.

They were all armed to the teeth, and had the air of men continually on the lookout for a fight.

Night soon came, and I went into the hut that had been given to me, but could not sleep, for all the villagers were awake, and the drums were beating from one end of the village to the other. Songs of war were sung by the men, women, and children around their Mbuiti (an enormous wooden idol, which was in the midst of the village). Besides, I thought the village might be surprised during the night by the warlike and treacherous Bakalais. So I need not tell you that all my guns were loaded and all the guns of my men likewise.

I did not like this kind of travelling at all.

These men were all painted with colored chalk, red and yellow being the favorite colors; they were covered with fetiches, which they believed would protect them from the deadly weapons of their enemies; and by the dim light of their fires and torches they appeared to me more like devils than men. The village was also strongly fenced with long poles.

At last the morning twilight made its appearance, and after giving a present to the King, we got ready and by sunrise were on our way.

We soon came to a Bakalai village, and there I made my head-quarters. The country abounded in birds: wild boars were also said to be abundant, and leopards were rather common. This was just the country in which I expected to discover new species of birds and to enjoy some grand hunting.

The house I lived in was at the extreme end of the village, and the villagers were very kind to me.

One night I heard a great cackling of my fowls, who perched on a tree near my hut, and soon after I heard them flying away in every direction. I jumped from my couch and opened my door, thinking some one was

ENCOUNTER WITH A LEOPARD.

trying to steal some of them. The moon was in its last quarter, so it was not dark as I stepped into the yard, when lo! I was struck with terror to find myself face to face with a tremendous leopard! How big he looked! I was so astonished that for the space of thirty seconds—which seemed to me to be minutes—or perhaps more, I did not stir a step. I looked at the leopard, which cer

tainly was not more than six yards from me, and the leopard, which probably was quite as much astonished at my sudden apparition, looked at me. I must have appeared to him like a ghost. I seemed to be spell-bound. So did the leopard.

Suddenly I came to my senses, and having no weapon with me I made a rush for the door, shut myself inside, seized my rifle, then opened the door in the quietest possible way. Now I felt strong with my gun in hand and so looked out for Mr. Leopard; but the great beast had gone. I fancy he was as much frightened as I was.

Such a sudden meeting in the night had never happened to me before, and has never happened to me since; and I hope never will happen to me again. In the morning, when I awoke, the enormous foot-prints of the beast reminded me that it was not a dream.

The next day I bought a goat and tied it by the neck to a tree, just on the border of the forest clearing. Not far from the tree where the goat was tied there was another tree, a huge one, so I concluded to lay in wait there for the leopard, and at night, every preparation having been made before dark, I brought back the goat to the village.

About ten o'clock, with a torch in one hand and leading the goat with the other, I tied the animal in the most secure manner, and so that the leopard would have trouble to carry it off at once. I went and seated myself on the ground, my back protected by the trunk of the huge tree I have just spoken to you of, and facing the goat. I am sure I was not more than six yards from it. I extinguished the torch so that it was pitch dark. At first I could not see a yard off, but at last my eyes got accustomed to the darkness, and I could see the goat plainly. The

night was clear and the stars shone most beautifully above my head. But how strange every thing looked around me! A chill ran through me as I gazed around: every thing seemed so mournful; alone in such a place; while now and then the cry of the solitary owl broke the deadness of the awful silence.

The goat in the mean time was continually bleating, for the little creature had an instinctive dread of being alone in such a place. I was glad he cried, for I knew it would make the leopard come if the animal could only hear him.

One hour passed away: no leopard! Two hours: no leopard! Three hours: nothing! I began to feel tired, for I was seated on the bare ground. Once or twice I thought I heard snakes crawling, but it was no doubt a fancy.

I do not know, but I think I must have fallen asleep, for on a sudden, looking for the goat, I saw that it was not there. I rubbed my eyes, for I really was not sure of them, but I was not mistaken; no goat was to be seen! I got up, and my wonder was great when at the place where the goat had been I found blood. I could not believe my senses. I lighted the torch and looked at my watch: it was four o'clock in the morning: and then I saw distinctly the foot-prints of the leopard. There was no mistake about it; the leopard had come, killed and carried away the goat, and during that time I was fast asleep!

Just think of it! I must have slept almost two hours, and I thanked my stars that the leopard had taken the goat instead of myself! It would have been a dreadful feeling if I had been awakened as I was car-

ried away in the jaws of the leopard, his teeth deep into my body, as the thing might well have happened. I wondered why it had not, and promised myself to be more careful in future. Then I remembered how tired I felt before I went to sleep.

If the goat had not been carried away I should certainly have thought that I never had fallen asleep.

As I learned more about leopards I found they do not generally leave their lairs before one o'clock, unless pressed by hunger.

Sorrow soon afterward came in that village—a woman was killed on the roadside by some unknown enemy: the villagers retaliated and went and laid in ambush and killed some one belonging to another village; the whole country had been involved in war for some time, and as it was unsafe to walk anywhere, I concluded to leave the poor deluded people who had been very kind to me. So, after packing my collections of specimens of Natural History, I bade them a friendly farewell.

## CHAPTER IV.

HUNTING ELEPHANTS AND BUFFALOES.—A VENOMOUS SERPENT.—A SNAKE CHARMER.—HE IS BITTEN.—HE COMMITS SUICIDE.

It was midnight; the moon had risen, and I could look at the expanse of the prairies situated near Point Obenda, on the Gaboon estuary. The moon threw just light enough to show me the great solitude, in the midst of which there was not a living soul with me. As my eyes gazed upon the broad expanse, I tried to see if I could perceive any wild beast. At last I spied far off what I thought to be a huge elephant; it stood still: the great beast neither walked nor fed.

I immediately put my old Panama hat flat on my head and walked in a stooping posture toward the huge monster, who was far off. I approached nearer and nearer, when lo! the big beast began to move toward me. A feeling of awe crept over me; there was not a hill near to hide myself; there was not a tree for me to climb upon; I thought how small I looked by the side of this, the largest of the animals of the forest!

Did the elephant see me?

Did he come to meet me and attack me?

Such were the questions that came at once to my mind. My courage began to quail. I was, as I said, quite alone; I had left all my men in the camp: these

men were the slaves of some of my Mpongwes' friends, and they were, I knew, fast asleep; in case of accident I had no one to come to the rescue. At that time I was a young lad, and had no confidence in myself, and to fight an elephant which looked so big, seemed to me perfectly impossible. But very soon I got accustomed to face danger, and loved to hunt elephants. I was no more

LYING LOW FOR ELEPHANTS.

afraid of them. Well, the elephant kept still coming toward me as I lay flat on the ground. At last he stopped, and then I saw him raise his trunk; my heart began to beat terribly, for I thought he was coming down to charge upon me. Then he sniffed two or three times and suddenly ran away. I had shouldered my gun, re-

solved at any rate to try to kill him instead of being trampled down by his huge feet.

The sound of every one of his steps could be heard distinctly, as he ran away from me, and he was soon out of sight. He had gone into the forest, and nature fell back into its accustomed stillness. Now and then the voice of a frog resounded strangely from the prairie.

Suddenly a cloud came over the moon, and it grew almost dark; the wind blew strongly, for it was in the dry season and was quite chilly. After wandering a while I came at last to a large ant-hill and sheltered myself there, thinking at the same time that it would be a splendid place to hide and look for game.

How strange my shadow appeared by the side of that ant-hill, when the moon shone again!

I did not wait long for game. I had not lain long by the ant-hill before I saw coming out of the forest not far off a herd of *Bos brachicheros*, the wild bull of this part of Africa. How fantastic their bodies appeared, as one by one they came out of the forest: they were coming toward where I stood, and the wind blew toward me. I counted, I think, twenty of these wild buffaloes. They stopped for a while as if to determine what direction to take, and perhaps also to see if they might discover or smell the leopard, which is their most dangerous enemy, and then continued their march toward the ant-hill where I was. I became very excited, cocked my gun, and aimed at the bull which was heading the herd, then pulled the trigger; bang! and down he came. A general stampede followed, but just in the direction of the ant-hill. What did these fellows mean? Did they all want to charge me? No, they passed to the right and

left of the ant-hill. After they had passed I turned round and fired another shot into the midst of them, but this time with less effect, for none fell, and this second shot made them run away with greater speed than before. At any rate I was glad, for I had knocked down the bull, the head of the herd.

I wished I had a horse and a lasso; how quickly I should have come to them, and killed enough of them to give meat to all my men for several days to come.

I went back and saw the bull lying on the ground, not dead, but moaning terribly from pain. As I approached he tried to get up, but in vain; so another bullet in the head finished him.

My men, who had been awakened by the shot, looked round for me, and finding that I had gone, made for the direction of the firing, and there was great rejoicing as they approached and saw the huge bull lying on the ground, for plenty was to enter the camp with his carcase.

The beast was at once cut to pieces; each man took a load, and we made for the camp; for it was too cold to linger. Besides, I was getting tired. We were afraid to leave the animal alone during the night for fear of leopards.

It was four o'clock in the morning when I reached the camp.

Our camp was protected by the forest and was situated on the edge of it. I immediately started a tremendous fire, and felt so tired that I fell asleep directly on the bare ground, telling my men to keep watch. The good fellows were in good spirits, and already began to roast pieces of meat on the bright charcoal fire, and were

eating in such big mouthfuls that it would have made you laugh to see them.

As for me, as I said, I went to sleep, and my men the next morning said that I made a terrible noise snoring. I denied it and said I never snored, but they said I did. But after all, you know, I had no pillow, and I should not wonder if I did snore a little.

Next morning the sun rose brightly, the air was somewhat chilly, the breeze was fresh. I was happy, I remember. These were bright days for me: I was without care, and for some time the fever had left me. I was in good health and spirits.

After an early breakfast I started for the hunt. I had with me my best gun; the slave that followed me had another gun; this one was loaded with bullets; I had my dinner with me, and that dinner was a piece of the bull I had killed the day before which had been roasted on charcoal. I intended to dine on the banks of some little rivulet so that I might have water to drink during my meal. I would have no plate except a leaf; the trunk of a fallen tree was to be my seat, and my knees were to be my table.

With a light step I left our camp. My spirits were buoyant; discoveries of new animals, of new birds, of new countries loomed up in the distance. How much I would have to tell my friends on my return from that strange and wild land I had come to see, if God granted me life and health!

We went through prairies, swamps, and forest. At last we came to a spot where once a plantation stood; it was intersected by several little brooks of clear water. My man shouted, "*Omemba ompolo!*" (a large snake), and

I saw at the same moment an enormous black shining snake (a species of naja), one of the most dangerous species. I knew he was coming in our direction and belonged to that species that when bullied raises itself erect and wants to fight. He was a terribly big fellow, one of the largest I had ever seen; he looked loathsome and horrid; I could see distinctly his triangular head. I fired in haste, hoping to break his spine, but missed the reptile, and immediately he erected himself to a few feet in height and whistled in the most horrid manner, his tongue coming out sharp and pointed like an arrow. I fired again right into his head, and I do not know why, but I missed him again. Then the fellow gave a spring; I really do not know if he came toward me, for I fled panic-stricken, and when at a safe distance reloaded my gun with small shot, and returned to the spot where I had shot at him. I spied something just getting out of a little rivulet. It was the very snake itself which had crossed the water, and before he was entirely out I fired and killed him, or rather I succeeded in breaking his spine and making him helpless for attack or for running away. But he was not dead, and when I approached him he again gave a sharp whistle. I cut a branch of a tree for a stick to kill him with, and then examined his fangs: they were of enormous size, and almost an inch in length.

This snake was about ten feet long. We left it on the spot, taking its head and tail with us, which we carefully packed in leaves, for we wanted to show to our fellows of the camp what a big snake we had killed.

This species of naja is the only one I have ever seen which could erect itself.

One day I witnessed a fearful scene. A man, a native of Goree, an island on the coast of Senegambia, who had the reputation of being a snake-charmer and was then at the Gaboon, had succeeded in capturing one of these large naja. He was a bold man, and prided himself on never being afraid of any snake, however venomous the reptile might be; nay, not only was he not afraid of any of them, but he would fight with any of them and get hold of them.

I had often seen him with snakes in his hands. He was careful, of course, to hold them just by the neck below the head, in such a manner that the head could not turn on itself and bite him.

That day he brought into a large open place, perfectly bare of grass, one of these wild naja that he had just captured, and was amusing himself by teasing the horrid and loathsome creature when I arrived. It was a huge one!

Most of the people of the village had fled, and those natives who like myself were looking on, kept a long way off. Not a Mpongwe man, not a single inhabitant of the whole region I have explored, would have ever dared to do what the Goree man did.

Two or three times, as the snake crawled on the ground, we made off in the opposite direction with the utmost speed, myself, I am afraid, leading off in the general stampede; though I had provided myself with a gun.

It was perfectly fearful, perfectly horrid and appalling to see that man making a plaything of this monster; laughing, as we may say, at death, for it could be nothing else, I thought.

At first when I saw him he had the snake around his body, but he held it firmly just below the neck, and I could see by the muscles of his arm that he had to use great strength. As long as this part of the body is held firmly the snake loses much of its great power of crushing one to death as the boa-constrictor or python does

THE SNAKE CHARMER.

with larger animals, and as small snakes do with smaller game; but with this naja the danger would have been the venomous bite.

Then with his other hand he took the tail of the snake, and gave it a swing and gradually unfolded the reptile from his black body, which was warm and shining with

excitement, but always holding the head. On a sudden he threw the snake on the ground. Then the creature began to crawl away, when suddenly the Goree man came in front of it with a light stick and instantly the monster erected itself almost to half its full length, gave a tremendous whistle, which we all heard, looked glaringly and fiercely in the man's face with its sharp, pointed tongue out, and then stood still as if it could not move. The Goree man, with his little stick in his left hand, touched it lightly as though to tease it. It was a fearful sight—and if he had been near enough the snake would no doubt have sprung upon its antagonist. The man, as he teased and infuriated the snake with the rod he held in his left hand, drew the attention of the reptile toward the stick; then suddenly and in the wink of an eye, almost as quick as lightning, with his right hand he got hold of the creature just under his head.

The same thing that I have just described again took place. The snake folded itself round his body; then he unfolded the snake, which was once more let loose, and now this horrid serpent got so infuriated that as soon as he was thrown on the ground he erected himself, and the glare of his eyes was something terrific. It was indeed an appalling scene; the air around seemed to be filled with the whistling sound of the creature.

Alas! a more terrible scene soon took place! The man became bolder and bolder, more and more careless, and the snake probably more and more accustomed to the mode of warfare of his antagonist, and just as the monster stood erect, the man attempted to seize its neck as he had done many and many a time before, but grasped the body too low, and before he had time to let it go

the head turned on itself and the man was bitten! I was perfectly speechless, the scene had frozen my blood, and the wild shrieks of all those round rent the air. The serpent was loose and crawling on the ground, but before it had time to go far a long pole came down upon its back and broke its spine, and in less time than I take to write it down the monster was killed.

To the French doctor who had charge of the little colony the man went (happily he was just at hand); all the remedies were prompt and powerful; the man suffered intensely, his body became swollen, his mind wandered, and his life was despaired of; but at last he got better, and though complaining of great pain near the heart, he was soon able to go out again. A short time after this accident, having an axe in his hand, going as he said to cut wood, he suddenly split his own head in two. He had become insane!

## CHAPTER V.

AT COURT IN AFRICA.—COSTUMES OF THE COURT.—AN AFRICAN HOUSEHOLD.—A FALSE ALARM.

In the midst of the great forest, far from the sea, stands a village of Mbondemo.

Before I entered it the gate had to be opened in order to let me in. The village was composed only of a single street, each end was barricaded with stout sticks or palisades, and, as there was war, the doors or gates of the village were finally closed, and persons approaching, if they could not explain their intentions, were remorselessly speared and killed.

On the ends of the sticks making the palisades were skulls of wild boars, of gorillas and of chimpanzees. At the gate I entered there was a large wooden idol, and close by the idol was a very large elephant's skull.

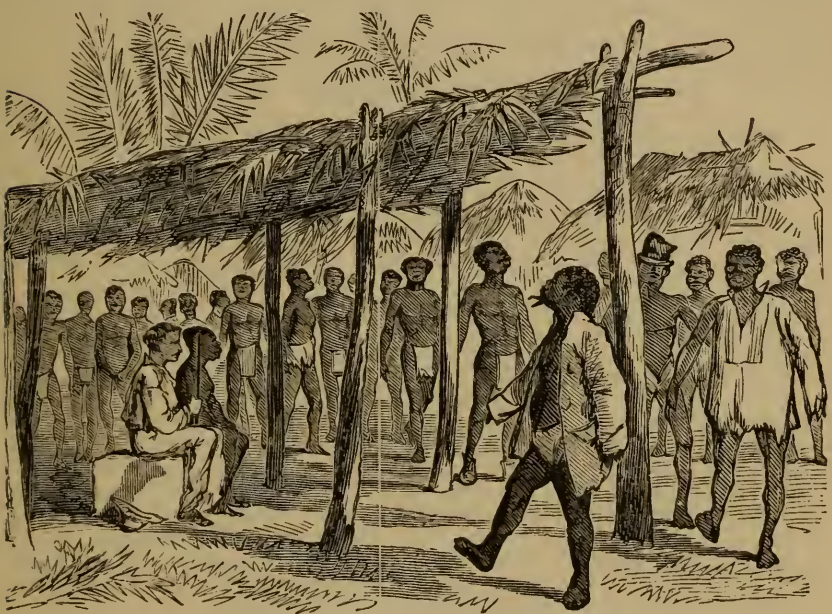
If I had come alone I should probably never have entered the village, but I had with me one of the King's numerous sons-in-law belonging to a far town, and he had sent word that I was coming with him and some of his people.

I had hardly entered when all sorts of wild shouts were heard from one end of the village to the other; the women ran away; the children hid in their huts; and

the men kept at a distance, so the way to the palaver-house was free.

These men were all armed to the teeth and were ready for fight. They were continually in hot water with their neighbors, and never knew when they were to be attacked. They are a quarrelsome people.

The palaver-house was a large shed built in the middle of the street, and there we seated ourselves. A few



APPEARANCE OF THE KING AND HIS COURT.

men braver than the rest came to look at what they thought the strange being, "the Spirit," that had come among them.

His Majesty headed the party, followed by his head-man. He wore an old red English coat and no other garments. He was a short, thick-built negro, and wore an immense pair of iron ear-rings. He was followed by what I supposed to be the second head-man, or prime minister.

This one had for his costume an old shirt which had only one sleeve and no sign of a button to be seen anywhere, a shirt that formerly must have been white but had never been washed since he got it, which was several years before. This prime minister had nothing else on. The third man, who of course formed part of his Majesty's suite, had on an old beaver hat and nothing else. Another that followed him had one of those old-fashioned black neck-ties (as tight as the neck itself, and attached with a buckle) which were worn some thirty years ago, and nothing else. How the deuce did that fellow get that cravat? I asked myself. I learned afterward that he had inherited it. Then came a fellow who by hook or by crook had possession of an old pair of shoes; how he had got them I was unable to find out. His father had perhaps left them to him. How steady, how grave they looked, as they passed one after another before me. These were the leading men of this Mbisho village. They thought themselves splendid, and their people thought the same. They came out in state.

I had seen before so much of the same kind of African court costumes that I tried to look sober, as they made their appearance in the midst of the shouts of their people, who praised their good looks.

They looked at me and I looked at them, and at last with one voice they asked me to notice how handsome they were, each at the same time in one way or another making the most of what he wore. I said they were very fine.

The houses of that village had no windows or doors, except on the side toward the street; and when the gates of the streets at each end were locked the village was in-

deed a fortress. As an additional protection trees had been cut down, and all the surrounding approaches had been thus blocked up. This village was situated on the top of a high hill.

Interiorly the houses were divided by a bark partition into two rooms; one the kitchen, where every body sits or lies down on the ground about the fire, smokes his pipe, and goes to sleep, while listening to the others. There also in the evening the harp is played.

The other is the sleeping apartment. This one is perfectly dark, and here are stored all their provisions, all their riches. To ascertain how large a family any householder has, you have only to count the little doors which open into the various sleeping apartments: "So many doors, so many wives." These houses, like all the houses I had seen in the interior, were made of the bark of trees.

There is nothing more disgusting than the toilet of one of these Mbondemo fellows, except it be the toilet of his wife. The women seem to lay on the oil and red earth thicker than their husbands.

The third night after I arrived in that strange village there was a new moon. As soon as the shades of evening came no one talked except in an under-tone. The people hardly came out of their huts; all was silent. In the evening the King came out of his house and danced along the street; his face and body were painted white, black, and red, and spotted all over with spots the size of a peach. In the dim moonlight he had a frightful appearance, which made me shudder at first, for I could not help thinking of the devil. I asked him why he painted thus, but he only answered by pointing to the moon without speaking a word.

The day of the new moon when the evening comes a strange kind of dread seems to seize these people. In all the tribes that day they mark their bodies with ochre, but I have never been able to find out the reason. To them the moon is the emblem of time. Hence, as the moon appears, many think that before it has disappeared again it will eat people; that is to say, that some one may die.

The fifth day I had been in that village, in the middle of the night, I was awakened by the war-drum beating, shouts of war, and a terrific uproar. Men and women were running to and fro, and all said the enemy was near. One man had been seen outside the palisade and when challenged had run away. "Let them come!" they shouted, "let them come! We have the *Spirit* among us!" (meaning me). "Dare to come, and we will kill you all!"

It was not a very pleasant situation to be in. I did not come to make war with one party or the other. The large Mbuiti was instantly brought out, and the people danced round it in the most strange and fantastic way; one by one the great Mbisho warriors came by her, and sung songs to her—the idol was a woman. One warrior danced tremendously before her; he kicked his legs up and down one after the other, then put himself in the most supplicating posture, his two hands forward, and simply asked that he might kill every man that came to attack him. At last he got so excited that I thought he would go mad. His eyes became wild, the foam came out of his mouth, the muscles on his face worked convulsively, he seized his spear with tremendous force, and his face looked like that of a demon. While he

was in that state the other people caught the excitement, the drum beat more loudly, they sung more ferociously than before, the whole town became warlike in the extreme. Of course there was no more sleep for me.

The morning at last came, but no warriors had appeared to attack the village. I am sure a panic had seized my friends, and that which they took for a man was nothing but some wild animal passing by the village walls.

The rainy season had fairly set in in these regions at the time of my arrival, and thunder, lightning, and heavy showers were common both day and night.

## CHAPTER VI.

HUNT FOR GORILLAS.—A LARGE ONE SHOT.—THE NEGROES MAKE CHARMS OF HIS BRAIN. — MOURNING IN A BAKALAI TOWN.

I AM in the densest part of the jungle!

What am I doing in that jungle, armed to the teeth, and loaded with provisions?

If you could have looked closely you would have seen three black men with me. They also were armed to the teeth and were loaded with provisions. Their bodies were painted and they were covered with war-fetiches; and if they thought their fetiches had any power it was time to wear them, for if we were not going to make war with man, we were to hunt and try to meet the terrible and ferocious gorilla.

Yes, we were in fighting trim, and we intended to remain in the forest as long as our provisions would hold out.

I had my best gun with me, which had been loaded in the most careful manner that very morning. My three men, Miengai, Makinda, and Yeava, had also loaded their guns, which were flint-locks. They had loaded them tremendously, and instead of lead bullets had rammed down four or five pieces of iron bar or rough broken cast-iron pieces, making the whole charge eight or ten fingers deep.

The country was very rough, hilly, and densely crowded with trees, and under the trees the jungle was almost impassable, consequently our hunting could hardly be counted sport, for we had to work fearfully hard and with the greatest care; but I felt strong, for I had rested for two or three days and the fever had let me alone.

We saw several gorilla tracks, and about noon divided our party in the hope of surrounding the resting-place of one whose tracks were very plain. I had scarcely got away from my party when I heard a report of a gun, then of three more going off one after the other. Of course I ran back as fast as I could, hoping to see a dead animal before me, but was disappointed: my Mbondemo fellows had fired at a female, and had wounded her, as I saw by the clots of blood which marked her tracks, but she had made good her escape. We set out in pursuit; but these woods were too thick, she knew their depths better than we did, and could go through them much faster.

I was greatly disappointed. This was the second time I had seen gorillas and they had run away.

I had heard of the fierce courage of the gorilla and his attacking man. I began to believe that all that had been told me was untrue; and said so to Miengai, who for sole answer said—"We have not yet seen a man gorilla. The mother gorilla does not fight."

Night came upon us as we were still beating the bush, and it was determined a little before sunset to camp by the side of a beautiful stream of clear water and to try our luck the next day. We had shot some monkeys and two beautiful guinea-fowls. After our fire had been lit the men roasted their monkey-meat over the coals; I

roasted my birds before the blaze on a stick. I was very hungry and enjoyed them.

Then I fixed my two fires in such a way that they would last for a long time. I laid between them, and instead of a roof of leaves I made one with the bark of trees, and soon fell asleep; but the *roars* of the leopards and the dismal cries of the owls awoke me several times.

We started early the next day, not discouraged, and pushed for the most dense and impenetrable part of the forest, for there, in those deep recesses, we hoped we might find a gorilla. Hour after hour we travelled, and yet no signs of gorillas—we had hardly met a track. We could only hear at long intervals the little chattering of monkeys, and occasionally of birds. The solitude was grand, the silence profound, so much so that we could hear our panting breath as we ascended hill after hill. I was beginning to despair.

Suddenly Miengai uttered a little *cluck* with his tongue, which is the native's way of showing that something is stirring, and that a sharp lookout is necessary; in a word, to keep ourselves on our guard, or that danger was surrounding us. Presently I noticed, ahead of us seemingly, a noise as of some one breaking down branches or twigs of trees.

We stopped and came close together. I knew at once by the eager and excited looks of the men that it was a gorilla. They looked once more carefully at their guns, to see if by any chance the powder had fallen out of the pans; I also examined mine, to make sure that all was right, and then we marched on cautiously.

The singular noise of the breaking of the branches

continued. We walked with the greatest care, making no noise at all. The countenances of the men showed that they thought themselves engaged in a very serious undertaking; but we pushed on, until I thought I could see through the woods the moving of the branches and small trees which the great beast was tearing down, probably to get from them the berries and fruits he lives on.

I remember how close we were to each other.

Suddenly, as we were still creeping along, in a silence which made a heavy breath seem loud and distinct, the woods were at once filled with the tremendous barking roar of the gorilla.

Then the underbrush swayed rapidly ahead, and presently there stood before us an immense male gorilla. He had come through the jungle on all-fours, to see who dared to disturb him; but when he saw our party he stood up and looked us boldly in the face. He stood about a dozen yards from us, and it was a sight I shall never forget. He looked so big! Nearly six feet high, with immense body, huge chest, and great muscular arms, with fiercely-glaring, large, deep, gray eyes, and a hellish expression of face, which seemed to me like some nightmare vision. Thus stood before me the king of the African forest.

How black his face was!

He was not afraid of us. He stood there, and beat his breast with his huge fists till it resounded like an immense bass-drum, which is their mode of offering defiance; meantime giving vent to roar after roar.

This roar was the most singular and awful noise I had ever heard in these African forests. It began with

a sharp *bark*, like that of an angry dog; then glided into a deep bass *roll* which literally and closely resembled the roll of distant thunder along the sky. I have heard the lion roar, but greater, deeper, and more fearful is the roar of the gorilla. So deep is it that it seems to proceed less from the mouth and throat than from the deep chest and vast paunch of the beast.

The earth was literally shaking under my feet as he roared, and for a while I knew not where I was. Was it an apparition from the infernal regions? Was I asleep or not? I was soon reminded that it was not a dream.

I said quietly to myself—"Du Chaillu, if you do not kill this gorilla, as sure as you are born he will kill you."

His eyes began to flash fierce fire as we stood motionless on the defensive, and the crest of short hair which stands on his forehead began to twitch rapidly up and down and was perfectly frightful to look at. His powerful fangs, or enormous canines, were shown as he again sent forth a thunderous roar: the red inside of his mouth contrasted singularly with his intensely black face.

And now truly he reminded me of nothing but some hellish dream-creature — a being of that hideous order, half man, half beast, which we find pictured by old artists in some representations of the infernal regions; but nothing they ever painted could approach this horrid monster in ugliness.

He advanced a few steps in a waddling way, for his short legs seemed incapable of supporting his huge body; then stopped to utter that hideous roar again—advanced again, and finally stopped when at a distance of five or six yards from us. And then—as he extended his arms

FIERCE ATTACK OF A GORILLA.

as though ready to clutch us, and just as he began another of his frightful roars, beating his breast with rage —what a huge hand he had!—I fired, and killed him.

With a groan that had something terribly human in it, and yet was full of brutishness, he fell forward on his face like a man when he is struck by a bullet in the chest. He shook convulsively for a few minutes, his limbs moved about in a struggling way, the tremor of the muscles ceased, and then all was quiet—death had done its work.

The monster was hardly dead when I suddenly began to tremble all over, my lower jaw met my upper one in a way I did not like at all, and my men looked at me with their mouths wide open in perfect amazement. They could hardly believe their eyes, but having recovered themselves, they asked me what was the matter. I answered that I did not know, and that I had asked myself the same question.

For fifteen minutes my jaws went on cracking against each other, and the more I tried to stop them the more they chattered. I felt awfully mortified; but there was no help for it.

I said—"Next time you will see; I shall not do it again." I kept my word, but I never met a large male gorilla without thinking that it might be the last of me.

There was great rejoicing, but it did not last long, for they soon began to quarrel about the apportionment of the meat. They really eat the creature, and the Fans told me that next to the flesh of man the gorilla meat was the best. It looked wonderfully like beef, only it seemed to be almost wholly composed of muscle.

I saw that they would come to blows presently if I

did not interfere; hence I said that if they were going to fight I would join in; and taking the butt-end of my gun, I said I would smash the heads of the three while they were fighting with each other.

This saying of mine at once made them laugh and they became quiet. They knew that I meant what I said, and they did not fancy getting a thrashing.

The subject of the quarrel was about the brain of the gorilla. Miengai said he would have the whole of it, for he was the oldest. What would they have known about the spirit pointing out to me if it had not been for him? He said this with such complacency and self-satisfaction that I could not help smiling; but this argument of Miengai did not seem to satisfy Makinda and Yeava.

So I said I would give part of the brain to each of them, and when they had it they wrapped it most carefully in leaves, and I was told that *monda* (charms) were to be made of this—charms of two kinds. Prepared in one way, and mixed with bone, claws, feathers, ashes of certain beasts, birds, and trees, the charm would give the wearer a strong hand for the hunt, after he had rubbed his hands and arms with the mixture. Prepared another way it gave the wearer success with women; he became irresistible, and all the pretty girls were willing to become his wives. I could not help thinking that if that latter charm was real, how much bachelors and widowers would like to possess it at home where pretty girls are so difficult to please.

My men in the evening fed on the gorilla meat, and I fed on the meat of a small and beautiful little gazelle which Makinda had killed.

The blazing fires shed their light through the beauti-

ful forest, and I went to sleep happy : but during the night I awoke, uttering a tremendous shout which made my men laugh, for they had been up for some time in order to eat a little more of the gorilla meat. I had the nightmare, and had dreamed that I was pursued by half a dozen gorillas, and when I gave that awful shriek I had just fancied that one of these monsters was clutching me and was going to carry me away to the forest.

We were tired and worn out, but at last we reached a deserted village which we had found before our hunting and where we had our camp. Judge of our astonishment when I found the place in possession of a division of travelling Bakalais! The village was full of them: men, women, children and babies were there; they had quantities of food; all their baggage, composed of old baskets, cooking-pots, calabashes, mats; and all their farming implements. The men were all armed.

My apparition among them threw them into the utmost confusion, and if I had not been followed by Miengai, who shouted to them to keep still, they would have fled ; but after a while we were great friends, especially after I had distributed a few beads among the women.

They had been living on the banks of a river called Noya, and were moving far from that place toward another village where the old chief had two or three sons-in-law and the same number of fathers-in-law.

These people seemed to be in dread of something. They seemed to be in retreat, as though they had fled from their former place of abode.

I learned that, a few days before, one of their men while bathing in the river had been killed by some unknown enemy. Hereupon they were seized with a pan-

ic, believed their village attacked by witches, that the Aniemba witchcraft was among them, and they must abandon it and settle elsewhere or they would all die one after the other.

Just a little before sunset I saw every one of them retire within doors; the children ceased to play, and all became very quiet in the camp, where just before there was so much noise and bustle. Then suddenly arose on the air one of those mournful, heart-piercing chants which you hear among all the tribes of this land. It was a chant for one of their departed friends. As they sang, tears rolled down the cheeks of the women, fright distorted their faces and cowed their spirits.

I listened and tried to gather the words of their chants. There was a very monotonous repetition of one idea—that of sorrow at the departure from among them of one of their friends and fellow-villagers.

Thus they sang:

*We chi noli lubella pe na beshe*
"Oh, you will never speak to us any more,
We can not see your face any more;
You will never walk with us again,
You will never settle our palavers for us."

And so on.

They sang until the sun had disappeared below the horizon, till the orb that gives gladness to the heart and life to the world had gone from sight, and they chose the time of its disappearance to pour out their mourning-songs. I thought there was something very poetical in the relationship of the time to the subject. For what should we do without the sun? It is the very heart of life!

## CHAPTER VII.

AN AFRICAN FIRESIDE.—A CAMP BY THE SEA-SHORE.—THE FIRST GORILLA HUNTER.—NEGRO BLARNEY.

As I and my men lay by the fire, I said to them—"Now to-night I am going to tell you a story; an old story from the white man's country concerning yours." There was a very great silence at once, for they knew it was not often I came out with a story, and they all shouted with one accord—"Tell us a story!" at the same time forming a circle round me.

So I begun: "Ever so long ago, and a long way off from here, but still in your own land, there was a powerful country called Carthage. The people of that country were brave and not afraid of war. They had many ships, and their ships went into different countries. At that time the Commi nation must have been a long way in the interior and your people had never seen the sea.

"Would you believe," said I, "that these Carthaginians came with their ships round here? And I really think they saw the very country in which we now are! They not only saw this country, but saw the gorilla, yes, saw the gorilla! If you were in the white man's country I would show you the old manuscript (the book), where we have an account of what I am going to say. You know," said I, "that words coming from the mouth are soon forgot-

ten, but these words that are written are not." Then taking from my chest my journal, I read it to them, and then said—"When I am dead, and you and your children are dead, and for ever so long afterward, that journal, if it is not lost, will be read in the same manner as I read it to you to-day, and the people will understand the meaning of it then as you do to-day, and will know what I did, though thousands of rainy and dry seasons may pass away.

"So Hanno the Carthaginian," I continued, "was the head-man of all these ships, and left Carthage with sixty vessels. In that time the ships were unlike those you see now, and thirty thousand men and women are said to have sailed with him. Each ship was rowed by fifty oarsmen. When we read that book called the 'Periplus; or, The Voyage of Hanno,' we find the following words in which we now suppose he alludes to the gorilla:

"'On the third day, having sailed from thence, passing the streams of fire, we came to a bay called the Horn of the South."

["That 'Horn of the South,'" I added, "might be Cape Lopez."]

"'In the recess was an island like the first, having a lake, and in this there was another island full of wild men.'"

[At this point of my story they looked in each other's faces with amazement.]

"'But the greater part of them were women with hairy bodies, whom the interpreters called Gorillas.'"

[Here there rose a wild shout of astonishment.]

"'But pursuing them, we were not able to take the men, who all escaped from us by their great agility, being

*cremenobates* (that is to say, climbing precipitous rocks and trees, and defending themselves by throwing stones at us). We took three women, who bit and tore those who caught them, and were unwilling to follow them. We were obliged to kill them, and took their skins off, which skins were brought to Carthage, for we did not navigate further, provisions becoming scarce.'"

EVENING AMUSEMENTS IN AFRICA.

During this latter part of my story there was a dead silence, and as soon as I had finished they said—"Chaillu, is this a real story or not?" And when I assured them it was, they said—"Yes, it must be the gorilla that that man called Hanno saw."

I was quite astonished at their remembering the name

of the admiral; it showed me what an impression my story had created on their minds.

Then said I: "Boys, there are two or three points in the story I have told you which inclines me to believe that the country Hanno speaks of is not this one, and still there are several facts which make me think that the country where we are now is the same.

"The very land on which we stand is sandy; not far off is the River Fernand Vaz, and on one side another river, the Commi River, is found. It may be that the land on which we stand was then an island, and that Cape Lopez is the Horn of the South of which that great man Hanno speaks. Time changes countries; in one part the sea will take away, in another part the sea will give. Such is the country in which we are."

They shouted with one accord that it could not be; how could land rise? how could the land go down? As to the sea eating away the land, they believed it, for they had seen it; and as to the land gaining in some places, they believed that also, for they had seen it.

They all wondered how near the word Gorilla was to that of Ngina and Nguyla, the latter name being given by the Bakalai to the beast.

After my story, we all went to bed. I wrapped myself carefully in my blanket and soon fell asleep, thinking unconsciously of the gorillas, and hoping soon to meet some.

It was the dry season; we were in the month of August, and I was near Cape St. Catherine. The wind was blowing hard, the atmosphere was chilly, the sky was clouded as though it was going to rain, but no rain was coming, for no rain falls at this time of the year.

The thermometer stood at 70°, but I felt quite cold, and I wore a sailor's woolen shirt.

The sea was rolling up the shore in heavy rollers which would upset a canoe in the twinkling of an eye; we had just arrived, and had come to hunt, fish, and be merry.

My Commi men had all gone to the woods to cut branches of palm-trees, and collect poles to build shelters.

I wish you could have seen the place where I had my encampment. On that part of the coast from Cape Lopez, and further south than Cape St. Catherine, the whole coast is low and covered with prairies which lift but a few feet above the sea level. They are wooded here and there, and shrubs are often mixed with the grass growing on the sandy soil; the grass is good, not growing to a great height, but at this time of the year it has been burned down. The landscape has a great sameness, and from the sea it is most difficult to know any special spot of the land. Altogether it is a dreary country, a very dreary country to look at, but after all I was thankful not to be shut up in the forest; for to see nothing but trees and trees is very tiresome; besides, the Atlantic was before me, and as I gazed upon its broad waters I wished I could see the shores of America.

The spot where I stood was about two degrees south of the equator.

Our camp was to be built near one of those numerous islands of trees which dot the prairie, and we were to have it built in such a manner as to protect us from the high winds which blew almost directly from the south that time of the year.

One by one the men came back—some with a load of

long stem-branches of the palm; others with the leaves; others with fire-wood, and others with sticks to make our beds with.

Then we went to work in earnest, and as they worked the men sang songs. These men, my own people, had always been with me wherever I went except when I went too far into the interior. They were all splendid canoe-men.

There was Kombé whom we had called the quarreller; Ratenou his brother, who was a splendid fellow to go with his canoe through the breakers; Oshimbo, who could paddle better than any man I ever knew; Ritimbo, a jolly good fellow, always ready to beat the tam-tam when asked for; Makombé, a splendid one to tell us marvellous stories in the evening; Rakenga, a great fisherman; Bandja, a man who knew how to climb the palm-trees and get palm wine; Adouma, who could trap game and was said to possess a wonderful fetich to make the game come to him; Risani, a good carpenter, who said he was willing to work, but who was continually talking of the amount of food he could eat; then came Yombi, who constantly bragged of how much palm wine he could swallow, but was always promising never to get tipsy—for I had promised him as good a drubbing as ever he would wish to get if I caught him in a state of intoxication. The last man of the party was a slave, a harp player.

There was no hunter but myself.

So you see we were a nice set altogether, and all were devoted to me and obeyed me cheerfully. They all loved me dearly. Indeed, all the people of that country loved me.

We had also quite an outfit of things with us. The cooking utensils were numerous: we had three brass kettles, three iron pots, one frying-pan, and three water-jars. We had also three axes, half a dozen machetes, and several fishing-nets, and I had three of my guns, fifty pounds of shot, a couple of hundred bullets, and there were flint-lock guns for the men. We did not care to be armed; we were in our own country—in the Commi Country, where my settlement of Washington is situated.

I had three chests, one containing my clothes and one filled with splendid heads of Kentucky tobacco for my men, for they were all inveterate smokers, myself being the only one that did not smoke. I had also several dozens of pipes.

All rejoiced at the unbounded supply of tobacco and pipes: they were to have such a glorious time; they were to take such great care of their friend Chaillee, their king; there was no other Ntangani (white man) like him; he was their good Mbuiti (spirit); all this talk was to soften my heart about the tobacco.

At last the camp was done, and we were not sorry, for we had worked hard the whole day. We had a huge pile of plantains with us, which the wives and slaves of King Olenga Yombi had brought to us; we had a large quantity of sugar-cane and some baskets of ground-nuts; the river and the sea were not far off, and having our nets with us there was a prospect of getting plenty of fish.

In the evening, when my men were smoking their pipes, we quietly talked about our hunting and fishing prospects.

I had discovered that this Cape St. Catherine was a

very great gorilla country. These huge beasts roam in the forests which grow down to the very edge of the sea, and now and then get a peep at the ocean. I wonder what they think of it. I would have given the world to see them looking at it; to see their deep gray eyes gazing on the broad expanse of the waters. I have seen their very footsteps within a few yards of the beach.

## CHAPTER VIII.

HIPPOPOTAMUS HUNTING.—WE KILL ONE.—THE MEN EAT IT.—POOR BEEF.—WHAT THE TUSKS ARE FOR.

It was night; the moon had just risen, and threw a strange glare on every thing round; I was in the prairie, and had been there since ten o'clock in the morning, looking for wild beasts.

At last I saw five hippopotami grazing. I approached with cautious steps, or rather I crawled on the ground toward the huge beasts, till I came near enough to see the shadows their immense bodies threw around them.

The question was how to get within gunshot without being seen. There was nothing to protect me from their view, for the grass had been burned; there was nothing either to protect me against their assault. Supposing that I killed the one I should shoot at, the others might take it into their heads to charge upon me. Not a tree was within reach. Now I had been so accustomed to hunt wild beasts that I was not afraid of any of them, but I knew that I could not kill five hippopotami at once.

Suddenly the animals turned round and gradually approached a grove of trees; but what was to be done? the wind almost blew from that grove toward them! "At any rate I will try," said I to myself, "to go there,

but I must take a roundabout way." How careful I had to be in order not to be seen!

I felt very much excited, and when I reached the little island, or grove, of trees without being discovered I was mightily pleased with myself. It was, I thought, a splendid piece of woodcraft on my part. I fancied I was almost the equal of Aboko, who had killed the rogue elephant at Cape Lopez. I had reached the grove from the opposite side to that where I supposed the hippopotami to be. The only sure way for me to come close to them was to go through the grove and wait until they should come within gunshot from the other side.

The trees were not very thick, and I could pass through the underbrush without making much noise. I thought that perhaps there was a leopard there, and if so he would leap upon me before I was aware. It was just the time of the night when they were out, and they abounded in that region. I therefore entered the woods, looking to the left and to the right and ahead of me, in order not to be surprised, and met several hippopotami tracks.

Just as I was in the midst of the grove I suddenly heard a great crash in the direction I was going. Then followed several other crashes coming from other parts. I listened: they were the hippopotami: they had entered the grove by several paths converging toward me.

I kept still. I do believe my hair must have stood up on my head, for I was awfully excited. The hippopotami were coming just where I was.

I cocked my gun, hid myself behind a big tree, and waited. I heard the crash of branches in all directions except one, and finally saw the branches of the trees

HUNTING HIPPOPOTAMI

moving not far from me, and by the dim moonlight piercing through the not very thick foliage, I perceived a monster hippopotamus, the male of the herd, coming sideways so as to pass within a few yards of me. Suddenly he stopped; gave one of his sonorous grunts; and then advanced. What a monster he was! What a huge body! What short legs! At last, just as he had passed me, so that he could not face me without turning his unwieldy body, I fired into his ear, and the monster dropped on the spot with scarcely a struggle. But I wish you had been with me to hear the rush of the others. I thought all the trees were coming down! One in his fright came down in my direction. I thought he was charging me, so I fired, and I heard the bullet strike some part of his body, probably one of his tusks, for it made a great noise; but that was all; he passed on with a rapidity of which I thought these beasts perfectly incapable. I was glad when they were all out of the way.

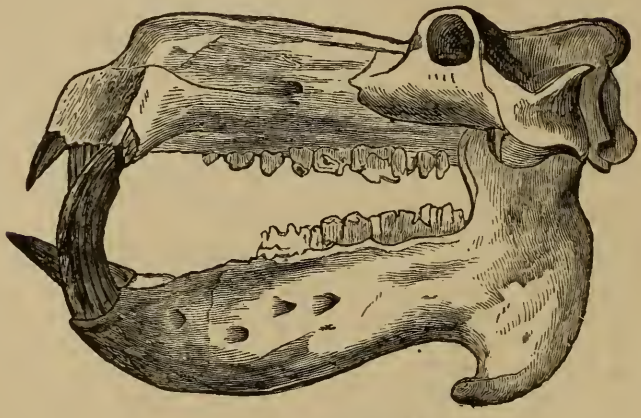
It had been an exciting hunt and I was satisfied. So I returned to the camp, and the next day we all went to cut up the beast. Some of the married men cut long strips of the hide to make whips, which they use pretty freely on the backs of their wives; but I made them promise not to use these whips except in self-defense.

There was joy in the camp in the evening. We had music, and I enjoyed the broth amazingly; it was really good, and I wish I could say the same of the flesh; but he was an old fellow and the meat was exceedingly tough. I soon gave up the job of trying to eat it.

It did me good to see how my men enjoyed it. They had a dance in the evening.

In the book called "Stories of the Gorilla Country" I

have not told how curious is the head of this great, unwieldy creature.



HEAD OF HIPPOPOTAMUS.

Look at the huge, crooked tusks! What are they for?

After watching a great many times the movements of the hippopotamus, I became assured that these huge, crooked tusks, which give its mouth such a savage appearance, are designed chiefly to hook up the long river-grasses on which these animals feed in great part. I have often seen one descend to the bottom, remain a few minutes, and re-appear with its tusks strung with grass, which was then leisurely chewed up.

There are no large herds of hippopotami in the parts of Africa I have explored, like those found in South Africa, thirty being about the greatest number I have ever seen together.

## CHAPTER IX.

### A GREAT GORILLA.

A FEW days after killing the hippopotamus I took a solitary path in the woods, leading to one of the lagoons or creeks so common along this coast. Many of the trees growing in the woods belonged to a species of African teak. The soil being sandy, the forest was not dense. Here and there a cluster of palms, bearing the nut that furnishes the palm-oil, was seen. Liannes and creepers twined round some of the trees and hung gracefully down. The limbs and trunks of many trees were literally covered with orchidæ, commonly called *air plant.* These when in bloom bear very beautiful flowers which shed a delicious fragrance.

In many places the pine-apple plants were very abundant and grew by thousands close together.

Now and then a little stream, meandering through the woods, found its way to the creek or to the sea.

Birds were scarce, very scarce, and the silence of the woods was only broken by the booming sound of the heavy surf, as each wave broke in foaming white billows before it reached the shore. The wind blew hard, as usual at that time of the year, and whispered strangely as it passed through the trees to the country behind.

Now and then I could see the foot-prints of gorillas that had wandered like myself through the woods, but these foot-prints were several days old. I came to a place where the pine-apple plants were abundant, and where the gorillas had evidently feasted on the leaves, for thousands of them had been plucked out and only the white part eaten. Here and there a young pine-ap-

FOOT-PRINTS OF THE GORILLA.

ple had been partly eaten away by these hairy men of Hanno, one or two bites taken and the fruit then thrown aside.

I had to be very careful in walking for fear of making a noise, for the forest not being dense, gorillas could have seen me at a long distance. The tondo fruit was also abundant throughout the wood.

After I had followed the woods along the sea-shore for a while I suddenly came to a place where a large male gorilla had been: the foot-prints were of enormous size and he must have been a monstrous fellow.

This place was not further than three feet from the beach, and I could distinctly see by the foot-prints of the monster that it had been on all-fours and suddenly had raised itself to an erect posture; while the bending of a branch about eight or nine feet high, just above the marks, showed that the animal had supported himself by it. By the position of the heels I knew that the monster had been looking at the sea.

Yes, he had been looking, probably in great wonder, at the broad expanse of water before him: he had seen the waves as they came in white billows breaking themselves on the beach; as far as his deep-sunken gray eyes could reach they had seen nothing but the ocean: perhaps he had also been looking at the sun as it disappeared below the horizon.

I could but wonder what the thoughts of that great ape might have been!

"Yes," said I to myself, "this must be the country where Hanno the Carthaginian came." And for a while I thought of those men of old whose history we learn at school or college.

They have gone, but they have left their mark behind them, and will continue to be remembered for a long time. Then I put my feet inside of the foot-prints of the gorilla—how small they did look when compared with those of the huge creature!—and for a while I stood exactly on the same spot where he had stood. I do not know why, but I felt a kind of satisfaction in doing so:

and like him I gazed at the sea, but, unlike him, I thought of the dear friends who lived on the other side, and I blessed them!

Then, looking carefully at my gun, I left the place and continued my ramble, when lo! in the far distance I spied a gorilla! The beast did not see me: it was a female, and must have been half a mile from the sea. I hid myself behind a tree in order to watch all her movements unseen. She was seated on the ground before a cluster of pine-apples, quietly eating one: she soon threw it away and plucked some of the leaves. How black the face was! She grinned now and then, probably from the joy the food gave her, when suddenly, to my utter astonishment, a little gorilla, about two feet and a half in height, came running to its mother, who gave a kind of chuckle that resembled very much the click of the Bushmen of Southern Africa.

I began to be terribly excited. I must kill the mother and try to capture the young one. How sorry I was to be alone. I wished my men had been with me.

Unfortunately there were many intervening trees, and she was about three hundred yards off. How could the bullet from my rifle reach her? I had just left my place of concealment when she perceived me. She uttered a piercing cry and disappeared, with her young one following her.

When I returned to the camp every body had gone except Kombé, who had been left in charge. On my way back I took the sea-shore, and saw on the beach for the first time the foot-prints made by the hippopotami, and I wondered what they came to do so near the sea. So I followed one and was surprised to see their heavy foot-

FEMALE GORILLA AND HER YOUNG.

steps along the beach: they must certainly have come there to bathe, and this I had never seen before.

One fine morning, just at sunrise, I spied a sail coming from the south. How glad I was as I saw that sail coming nearer and nearer!

I knew that white men were on board!

The canoe which my men had fetched from Amimbri lay on the beach ready to be launched: the men were there with their paddles ready. Ratenou was in command and waiting for my orders.

What was to be done? I had left the flag at Washington! How sorry I felt!

A long pole which Kombé had cut was brought, and

instead of the flag one of my white shirts was tied to its top by the sleeves, and then the pole was elevated, and soon the shirt floated in the shape of a flag.

The vessel came nearer and nearer the shore, and I could soon make out that it was a whaler: there was no mistake about it, for I could see the whale-boats.

With my spy-glass I looked and saw the white faces of the men.

The ship hoisted its flag, and the stars and stripes of the great Republic displayed themselves. A wild hurrah from me greeted their appearance, and my men gave three cheers.

The breakers were heavy, very heavy, but we must go on board; I must hear the news; I must see the face of a white man—I who had been so long away from civilization, from my kindred, and from the world.

"Boys, let us try!" I shouted with excitement; "let us go on board!"

All the voices of my men shouted, "Let us try!" and immediately the canoe came down the beach, five men on each side paddle in hand, Ratenou and I standing by the stern.

We were watching an opportunity when the angry billows should calm down and there should be a lull. The lull came, and almost as quick as lightning the canoe was in the sea and we were off. My men paddled as hard as they could in order to pass the surf before the heavy rollers should break again.

But lo! when we were about midway, the face of Ratenou changed color, for from far away came one of those heavy swells that, as he knew, would gradually change itself into a heavy roller as it neared the shore,

and in breaking dash to pieces all that came in contact with it. If that roller broke before it reached us, however, all would be right.

It came on, rising and rising, when suddenly Ratenou said—"Commi, you are men! Let us take care of our white man!"

Then the paddles stood still; the roller crested and broke right upon our canoe, upsetting it with fearful force, and whirling us round and round. I was stunned by the force of the waves; breaker after breaker came dashing upon us, one after the other, but the faithful Commi men were there, shouting one to another—"Let us take care of our white man!" Ratenou, Kombé, and Oshimbo were swimming under me; I was surrounded by them all; good, noble fellows they were. At last we reached the shore. I looked round. Every man was there; no one had been drowned; no one had had his head smashed by the upsetting of the canoe. With a grateful heart I thanked God for his goodness to us all. The tide was coming up, and our canoe and paddles were soon thrown on the beach by the force of the waves and the current.

I looked at that vessel, and how sorry I was when gradually its white sails became dimmer and dimmer in the distance. At last it disappeared, and with a heavy sigh I made for the camp.

If you had been in a strange land amid savages, I am sure you would have felt as I did then.

## CHAPTER X.

DEATH IN AN AFRICAN VILLAGE. — LAMENTATIONS. — THE FUNERAL CEREMONIES. — AN AFRICAN CEMETERY.

WHAT a strange thing is an African funeral! In a town on the banks of the Rembo, called Conaco, where I had just arrived in my canoe, a man was very ill. These poor savages seemed to be very sorry for him, but did not know what to do. If I remember aright, the name of that man was Irende. He had been a great warrior and a great hunter, but disease had laid him prostrate, though he was still a young man.

The next day a great many people came into the village with their tam-tams, or drums, and different sorts of musical instruments. They were to try if they could not drive the devil away. With a great deal of trouble a few guns had been obtained, and also some powder, in order to make more noise.

In the evening the people entered the hut of Irende and began to sing. The drummers had already gone inside and were beating their drums most furiously; a few broken brass kettles added their noise to that of the drums; some beat sticks on pieces of wood. In fact, every body tried to make all the noise he could. At last those who had the guns came and fired them close to the ears of the poor fellow, and also near his stom-

ach, where the *abambo* (the devil) was supposed to be. I could not stay more than five minutes in the hut, for the din was too great for me. They wanted to drive the abambo out of the poor sick man so that he might get well. But all the drumming they did, all the *mbuiti* (idol) had said concerning his recovery, all the care his wives, sisters and his mother bestowed upon him, were of no avail.

The poor fellow died the second day after my arrival, right in the midst of the drumming, just a few minutes after the guns had been fired near his ears and stomach. It was midnight when he died. I was in my hut, which was not far off, when suddenly there burst from one end of the village to the other a wail that told me the sad story. Irende was dead!

What a wail it was! It went right to my heart, it was so piercing, so heart-rending; I could not help but feel sorry for these poor people. The wailing and the mourning-songs lasted all night; there was no sleep for me.

In the morning I was led once more to the house where the body was laid. The room was crowded: women from all the villages round had come, and they were all seated on the floor. There must have been about three hundred of them, and they were singing mournful songs to doleful and monotonous airs. The tears were running down their cheeks. The wives of the poor fellow, ten in number, had shaven their hair, had taken off their garments and were almost naked, and they had rubbed their bodies with ashes. Their anklets and bracelets had been removed, and round their necks they wore a piece of native cord indicating that they were widows and in mourning.

At length through the thick crowd I discovered the body of Irende. It was seated on a stool, the back leaning against the wall. It was dressed in an old coat, and by its side was a harp—for Irende had the reputation of being a great musician; there also lay his spear and his gun, which were to be buried with him.

His wives were round him, talking, begging him to

MOURNING THE DEAD.

speak to them, and then silence followed. No answer came. Then there burst forth a heart-piercing wail. "He is dead! he is dead!" they shouted. "His lips will speak to us no more; he will not hunt for us any more; he will play no more on the *wombi* for us!" Then all ended in a long plaintive song.

The mother came, and kneeling before him took hold

of his feet, which is the most supplicating manner of address in Africa; she looked in his face and said in a very plaintive voice—"My son, you have not spoken to your wives, but I know you will speak to your mother. You will say to her that you are not dead."

The same silence ensued.

They all waited in vain for an answer for a few minutes; then the poor mother rolled herself on the ground at her son's feet, shrieked and cried, and said—"Irende, why do you not speak to your mother?" The poor mother's shrieks were so long, so piercing, and she uttered such a wail of grief, that the tears came into my eyes. The poor African mother had a heart!

As I left the hut, thinking how strangely the mind of man is constituted, the wailing continued, and was to be kept up until the burial of the corpse.

The day of the funeral came, and we went to the burial-ground. As the body left the village and was put into a canoe, the wailing was tremendous. The men that were to paddle were all painted, almost naked, and covered with fetiches. The drum beat as we descended the stream.

As we approached the burial-ground (for these Commi have a sort of cemetery) all became silent. Not a word was said; they prayed *Ovengua* not to get hold of them, and the corpse was left on the sand, a certain amount of which was thrown over it. His *wombi* was laid by his side, his gun and his spear were placed in his hand, and necklaces and ornaments were left with him. A cooked dish of plantain and a jar of water were placed beside him, so that he might drink and eat if he chose, then all was over and we came away.

What a strange burial-ground it was! It was situated on a prairie, with no trees in the neighborhood, and poles were the only signs that could show it to be a cemetery. Here and there a grim skeleton could be seen, and the remains of things that had accompanied the deceased men and women to the grave.

## CHAPTER XI.

A TORNADO.—BEFORE THE STORM.—THUNDER AND LIGHTNING.—AFTER THE STORM.

We had just returned to our camp in the forest. The day was intensely warm; the rays of the sun poured down upon mother-earth with fearful force; in the forest all was silent as death, for Nature herself seemed prostrated.

We were in the season of the tornadoes—the latter part of the month of March.

The light air that we had, had ceased. The horizon toward the north-east grew black; at first a black spot had appeared only a little above the horizon, then gradually rose higher and higher. The sight of this token inspired awe. The wind was blowing from the opposite direction. The white and fleecy clouds that were hanging in the atmosphere as they came near the black spot gradually stopped, and were slowly absorbed into black cloud.

I looked anxiously on. To a stranger the appearance of the sky showed that a fearful storm was coming.

The birds began to fly in the air in a frightened manner; my goats began to seek for shelter; the hens hid in the huts; the dogs also sought shelter; and the people were returning in hot haste from the plantations.

Every living thing seemed to know what was coming: even in the far distance I could hear the roar of the gorilla.

The black spot gradually rose and formed a semicircle, while now and then the distant sound of thunder came upon our ears, warning us of the approaching storm.

At last not a breath of air could be detected, and in an instant a white spot rose under the black horizon, and instantaneously scattered it into a thousand clouds. How wild and lurid the sky suddenly appeared! In less than two minutes it was one mass of blackness, the clouds fleeing with terrible velocity, driven away by the white spot, which now increased to huge dimensions. The tops of the trees began to sway rapidly, and before we knew it the fearful wind was upon us. Our little houses were unroofed, and the wind came with a violence that was quite appalling. The limbs of the trees broke down first, then the trees themselves, and as they fell each brought down half a dozen others with it, which in falling occasioned a booming sound that resounded from hill to hill. The monkeys became frightened, and their wild chattering indicated that they were filled with terror. It was indeed a wild and terrible spectacle.

Flashes of lightning were followed by terrific claps of thunder. The first clap brought me upon my feet, for I thought the lightning must have struck some of us. I was almost blinded by the flash. What a terrific report followed! It came on sudden and sharp like the firing of a cannon, and made my ears ring and ring till I thought I should be deafened.

This was followed by other terrific claps of thunder

A NIGHT STORM IN AFRICA.

and flashes of lightning which seemed to illuminate the whole sky, accompanied by a pouring rain, a rain so dense that one might have fancied the skies to have been rent in two. Finally the wind ceased, and, thank God! had only lasted about ten minutes, though turning all round the compass. The rain, thunder and lightning still continued. Such a storm I had seldom witnessed even in this region of thunder and tornado. Wherever I turned, the bright light in the skies met my eyes: from the West to the North, from the North to the East, and from the East to the South.

The flashes of lightning were horizontal, of tremendous glare and length, and zigzag; sometimes they were perpendicular. For hours and hours the boom of thunder went on, fearful claps bursting from every corner of the sky without intermission. There was scarcely a moment's interval between the reports. I took special pains to notice this fact.

The sound of the thunder seemed to come from all round the sky; the whole of the heavens seemed to be a sea of fire. What could be more sublime, in the whole domain of Nature, than this grand storm in these equatorial regions of Africa? It was worth coming from our milder climate to see it, to behold this war of the elements, to hear such claps of thunder, to see such torrents of rain pouring down.

Though filled with awe and a dread of I did not know what, I looked on till my eyes were almost blinded; I listened and listened until my ears were deafened by the appalling noise of the thunder. I am certain that no country can boast of more fearful thunder than these equatorial and mountainous regions of Western Africa.

At last, after a few hours, the claps of thunder became less terrible, and there were greater intervals between the flashes of lightning, which began to diminish in brightness. Gradually the storm ceased, the clouds disappeared, and the bluest of skies was disclosed overhead. What a deep blue it was; how beautiful, how lovely, how pure, and how serene!

O God, how great thou art! I said to myself. What is man that thou lookest down upon him? He is a creature of thy hands.

The stars shone with all their brightness. At that time of the year the southern heaven was in its full beauty. All the constellations of the Southern Hemisphere were in view, and the whole sky seemed to be in a perfect blaze of light. How beautiful and resplendent the Milky Way looked! Being not far from the equator, I could see also many of the northern constellations.

The constellation of the Great Bear was in full sight, and reminded me of my northern home, of dear friends, of joys that have gone, of friendships which distance could not kill, of boys and girls I knew, and I wondered if sometimes they thought of me as I thought of them.

I was wet through; for our fires had been extinguished and we had the greatest trouble to light them again; and during the night nothing was heard but the mournful cries of the owl and now and then the disagreeable howl of the hyena.

## CHAPTER XII.

A CREEK INFESTED BY SNAKES.—SNAKE IN THE BOAT.—AN UGLY VISITOR.

It is intensely hot. We are at the end of the month of March, and the rays of the sun are pouring upon us with a power which is terrific. Every two or three minutes I dip my umbrella into the water, for after this lapse of time it is perfectly dry; green leaves and a wet handkerchief are in my Panama hat, which now and then I also dip into the water of the stream.

You will ask me in what kind of country I find myself in such a plight. I am in a very complicated network of creeks, swamps, dense forest, and overflowed lands, forming a delta, which in the work I published in 1861 I named the Delta of the Ogobai. For several days I have been here in a canoe exploring the country by water. What a lonely place! We have not seen a single village, we have met not a single human being; it is a complete desolation, and on the day in question it seemed more desolate than usual. The creek we had got into was narrow, and on both sides there was an interminable forest of palms, that kind which yields bitter nuts to eat; these grow to the water's edge, and many of their graceful branches are bathed in the stream.

The current was strong, and evidently a tremendous

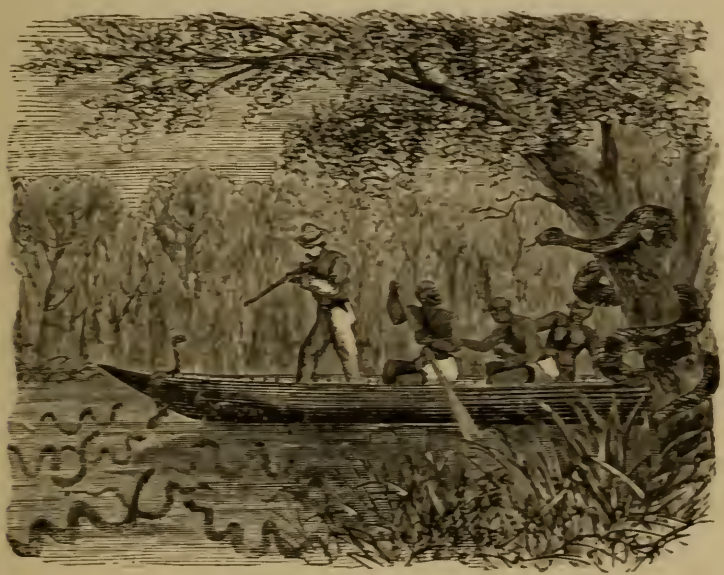
quantity of fresh water coming from the interior was carried by it into the sea.

The atmosphere was hazy, and, as is generally the case in those equatorial regions, I could see the vapor arising and quivering as it ascended.

At last we entered a narrow creek, where the current was not so strong. We had hardly proceeded two or three miles when snakes became quite abundant in the water. We were in the Creek of Snakes. I do not know what else to call it.

What a horrid sight! They were of all colors and sizes: some were small and slender, others short and thick. One peculiar kind struck me at once as one that I had never seen before. It swam not far from our canoe, and appeared to be of a bright orange-yellow color. I am sure it was a very venomous one, one whose bite would kill a man in less than five minutes, for the head was very triangular. Then came a large black one with a yellow stripe on the belly; it appeared to me to be ten feet long; the black shone as if it had been oiled. This fellow I also knew to be very poisonous; so when he raised his head above the water I sent a load of small shot into it, literally crushing it to pieces. Then we went immediately at him, and with a few strokes of the paddles we finished him up. I was going to make off, when two of the slaves who were of our party said we must put it in our canoe, and that they should eat the fellow in the evening. This created a great laugh from my Commi boys, and after making sure that the loathsome creature was dead we fished him out of the water. There was at first a jumping about of the men which I was afraid would upset the canoe, in which case we

would have been in a pretty fix, swimming about in a stream filled with snakes. At last order was restored; the snake was cut into several pieces, which continued to move and almost appeared like several separate snakes. The pieces were put in a basket, and the eyes of my Apingis began to shine with delight, and it made their mouths water, they said, to think of the nice meal they were going to have in the evening.



IN THE CREEK OF SNAKES.

Just at this moment I spied one of these black snakes trying to get into our canoe by the bow. I made a tremendous leap, as if I had been bitten by a scorpion, the sight was so sudden. I took my gun, loaded with small shot—the best load to kill serpents with—and fired, cutting the saucy fellow in two; then we paddled on, leaving master snake to take care of himself, knowing that his case had been settled.

I really believe all the snakes of the country had come to bathe in this creek on that day, and I did not wonder at it, it was so hot and sultry. I had often met with snakes in the river before, but never in such great numbers and of so many different species. In little more than one hour and a half I must have seen two hundred of them. I had never seen such a sight before and never have since.

Snakes are nasty things! I do not like them at all. They will never be my pets. But there is a country in the Bight of Benin where snakes can not be killed, under penalty of death.

The sun began to go down, and as we paddled along we looked for a dry place on the shore where we might spend the night. The snakes had disappeared, and none were to be seen in the water. Of that circumstance I was very glad.

To find a dry place was not an easy matter, for the land was low, swampy, and overflowed. The prospect of sleeping in the canoe and of being eaten up by musquitoes was not very cheering to my spirits. But the men knew a place where all the year round there was a dry spot, and where they often stopped when fishing; but we must pull very hard in order to reach there before dark. As none of us wished to sleep in the canoe, the fellows paddled as hard as they could, and by half-past five o'clock we reached the place.

It was sunset at six o'clock, so that we had plenty of time to fix our camp.

The place was dreary enough and not very safe, to judge from the foot-prints of wild beasts that had come prowling about there, among which I could see distinct

ly the tracks of what must have been an enormous leopard. Happily we had plenty of fire-wood in our canoe.

The spot where we were to spend the night was miserable: the ground was damp, and it was also dirty, for there were bones of fishes and wild animals, the skins of plantains scattered all over, and the remains of extinguished fires. The whole country seemed to be nothing but bog land.

The first thing we did was to attend to our musquito-nets. We cut the large branches of the palm and stuck four of them into the ground to hang our nets upon. How to sleep? this was the next great question. I did not like the idea of sleeping on the bare ground in a country where snakes were abundant. But what was to be done? It was getting late, so reluctantly I cut the leaves of the palm, put them thick one upon the other, and then laid my mat over the whole; my men did the same; the fires were lighted—about which we had some trouble, for my matches were wet. During the day, it being so warm, I had been afraid to carry them in my pocket or put them in a place where the sun shone, for fear that they would light of themselves. I had therefore placed them under the seat, and they had dropped down to the bottom of the canoe. So we had to use our flints and tinder.

When night came our fires were blazing, and the sight of our camp was curious in the extreme. I was quietly lying between two immense fires, which almost surrounded me, for I had a lively fear of the snakes and I did not like the idea of one coming round me at night. It is strange how it is possible to enjoy a fire in the woods in this damp and warm climate.

My men killed one of the three fowls I had with me; others took off the skins from the plantains, while the rest were preparing to boil the dry fish which we had in great abundance, for before entering the Delta of the Ogobai we had gone on a fishing excursion.

Our cooking implements consisted of a kettle for boiling the plantains, which, by the way, was getting to be much worn out, and my men were beginning to look forward to the time when it should be broken so that I would give it to them to make bracelets of; and two cooking-pots, one especially for my use and the other for the use of the men; I also had a frying-pan, but nothing had been fried in it since I had it, for want of lard or oil. Our entire cooking operations consisted of boiling or roasting over a charcoal fire.

The two poor fellows with the snake had no pot to cook it in, my Commi men objecting strongly to have any thing of the kind cooked in such a vessel. The Apingis were much downhearted, for they had anticipated much pleasure from their snake-broth, the snake being, they said, very fat. They had on hand a little salt and a little Cayenne pepper. It would have tasted so good! So they had to be satisfied with roasting the snake over the fire.

After our meal I opened my chest to get some tobacco. This of course "brought down the house," and they seemed perfectly happy after their hard day's work, for the poor fellows had worked very hard.

They seated themselves round the fires, smoked their pipes, and gradually one by one fell asleep. It was a fortunate thing we had musquito-nets, for I could hear these insects buzzing about in such a manner that

one might have almost thought a band of music was playing in the neighborhood.

At length I wrapped myself well in my blanket and went to sleep. But lo! in the middle of the night I was awakened by the cackling of one of the fowls, which was tied by the leg to a stick we had put on the ground. I popped my head out of my musquito-net, when I beheld by the glow of the fire an enormous python (or snake), a tremendous big fellow, who had just come out of the water and was about to gobble up one of the two fowls, and would have swallowed both of them if it had had time to do so. No others were aroused by the noise the fowls made, so I quietly took my gun that laid alongside of me, and sent two loads into the python, which settled him.

My men jumped up in alarm, seized their guns, and looked as warlike as possible. They thought we were attacked unawares by some Oroungou fellows, and set up a wild yell of defiance, which was responded to by a most hearty laugh on my part. In the mean time the defeated boa had moved about in the midst of us and sent all the fellows off, just as they were asking, "Who has been killed by that gun?" and I shouted in reply, "This enormous snake."

My two Apingi fellows' eyes brightened as they thought of the good food they were going to have, and said—"Ah! ah! if we had only known we should have brought a cooking-pot of our own; we would have had such nice snake-broth all the time!" This snake measured almost sixteen feet in length, and would have kept the fellows in broth for a long while.

We went to sleep again, leaving the two Apingis

busily engaged in cutting the boa into small pieces and in roasting some of it over the fire.

The next morning when I awoke the sun was bright; a kind of vapor was rising from the waters of the Delta of the Ogobai, and all Nature was still. I could not hear the song of a single bird or the chatter of a single monkey; now and then a fishing-eagle passed over our heads, and the whole scene presented was one of desolation.

We cooked our breakfast, and immediately after our meal we again set out and soon entered a very narrow creek—so narrow in some places that the trees on the two banks were so close together that we had trouble in passing through with our canoe; in one place I thought it would be utterly impossible.

At last we emerged into the waters of the Npoulou-lay and soon after found ourselves on the broad and placid waters of the Fernand Vaz, coming in sight of my settlement at Washington.

A thrill of joy filled my heart when I saw my little settlement, for I was tired and worn out, and I needed a little rest—a little comfort in a plain way. I wanted to see my plantation, to see how it had grown since we parted, and if my stock of fowls had increased by new broods, or I could get a little milk from my goats. Then I wanted to see good King Ranpano and his brother Rinkimongani and all the good folks of Biagano. They were there on the shore ready to receive me. They were honest, straightforward people.

## CHAPTER XIII.

DRINKING THE MBOUNDOU.—HOW OLANGA-CONDO COULD DO IT. — HOW THE MBOUNDOU IS MADE. — THE EFFECT OF THE POISON.

WHAT a wild scene I beheld; one which had never been seen before by any white man!

Olanga-Condo, a mighty *ouganga* (doctor), was to drink the *mboundou*. What an awful poison this *mboundou* is! Nevertheless, Olanga-Condo could drink it; yes, he could drink it by bowlfuls, one of which was more than sufficient to kill any man or woman.

You will ask me, How is it that Olanga-Condo could drink this *mboundou* and that other people could not? I suppose he accustomed his body to it by drinking it little by little from his childhood, but of course he would not tell any one how he could drink it without being hurt.

The strange scene took place at Goumbi.

King Quengueza had a dream, and in that dream he saw that there were people who were *aniemba* (wizards), and who wished to take his life. So he rose in the morning possessed with the belief that such designs were entertained against him. His already stern countenance became harsher, and the good old chief began to dread those around him. It was useless for me to tell him

that there were no such people as wizards, and that no living being had power to kill another by witchcraft.

He became suspicious of his dearest friends. His nearest relatives, he thought, were those who wanted to get rid of him in order to get his wives, slaves, ivory, and goods.

What a terrible superstition this belief in witchcraft is! The father dreads his children, the son his father and mother, the man his wife, and the wives their husbands. A man fancies himself sick; he imagines the sickness has been brought upon him by those who want him out of the way, and at last becomes sick through his fears. At night he fancies himself surrounded by the *aniemba* who are prowling round his huts, and that evil spirits are ready to enter into him as he comes out; and if this should happen he believes that disease and death are surely near.

So Quengueza covered himself with fetiches, and every day invoked the spirits of his ancestors—Igoumbai, Ricati, Kombi, and Niavi (his mother)—to protect him from the *aniemba*. How strangely his voice sounded in the silence of the night! One could not but be awed by it.

Every morning he told the wonderful and frightful dreams he had—for these people believe in dreams—and he was so convinced that the village was full of wicked sorcerers, that at last the whole people became infected by his fears, each one thinking that his life was at stake. Hence the *ouganga*, Olanga-Condo, had been ordered by the King to drink the *mboundou*, and then tell the names of the sorcerers.

The leading people of Goumbi had met, and protested that no one wanted to bewitch their king; they all wanted him to live to the end of time.

Now they all sat in a circle on the ground; each man had a short stick in his hand; and Olanga-Condo was to take his position in the centre and drink the *mboundou* in their presence.

In the mean time I had assisted in the operation of making the *mboundou*, an operation which the drinker does not witness. A few red roots of the plant called by them the *mboundou* were brought in, and the bark was scraped off by several of the natives into a vessel; into this a pint of water was poured, and in about a minute fermentation took place, and the beverage effervesced almost like champagne. The water soon became quite red, and was the very color of the bark when the effervescing ceased. Two of Olanga-Condo's friends were present during this operation to see that all was fair.

DRINKING THE MBOUNDOU.

When the mixture was ready Olanga-Condo came, went to the centre of the circle, and the bowl containing

the poison was handed to him: without faltering for a single moment, but full of faith, he emptied the bowl at one draught.

In about five minutes the poison took effect. He began to stagger about; his eyes were injected; his limbs twitched convulsively; his voice grew thick; his veins showed themselves prominently, and his muscles contracted. His whole behavior was that of a drunken man. He began to babble wildly, and then it was supposed that the inspiration was upon him. The people beat regularly upon the ground with the short sticks they held, and sang in a sort of doleful voice—

"If he is a witch, let the *mboundou* kill him,
If he is not, let the *mboundou* go out."

Then at times Layibirie, Quengueza's heir, and his nephews, Quabi, Adouma, and Rapeiro, asked if there was any man that wanted to bewitch King Quengueza.

Olonga-Condo went on talking wildly, not answering the questions, which were repeated over and over again. At last he said—"Yes; some one is trying to bewitch the King."

Then came the query, "Who?"

By this time the poor fellow was fortunately hopelessly tipsy, and incapable of reasonable speech. He babbled some unintelligible jargon, and presently the inquest was declared at an end.

No persons had been accused, hence nobody was to be killed. But sometimes these doctors do mention names, and one of these days I may give you an account of murders committed in the name of witchcraft.

The *mboundou* is a dreadful poison,* one from which

* This *mboundou* pretty certainly belongs to a natural order that con-

very few escape. Sometimes the veins of the victim will burst open, at other times blood will flow from his nose and eyes, and he drops dead a few minutes after drinking it. Hence the great power of the doctor. If a poor fellow is supposed to be a wizard, or to have bewitched the King or somebody else, he is forced to drink the *mboundou* whether he likes it or not. If the man dies, he is declared a witch; if he survives, he is declared innocent, and those who have accused him pay him a fine.

The ordeal is much dreaded by the negroes, who often run away from home and stay away all their lives rather than submit to it, and will often rather enslave themselves to another tribe.

When the wizards are said to belong to another village, then wars frequently ensue. The man thought guilty is demanded to drink the *mboundou*, while his friends, who know that he will probably die, refuse to give him up.

This belief in witchcraft is the great curse of Africa. According to this doctrine, every man that dies has been bewitched by some one. Death came into the world by witchcraft. For almost every man that dies somebody is killed, and often several persons are killed.

The women being deemed of very little account in

tains many venomous plants, viz., the LOGANIACEÆ; and, from the peculiar veining of the leaves, it is probably a species of *Strychnos*, belonging to that section of the genus which includes *S. nux vomica*.

The taste of the infusion is extremely bitter. I gave some of the roots to Professor John Torrey, of New York. In the book published by the Messrs. Harper, called "Explorations in Equatorial Africa," I published the letter this able chemist wrote me on the properties of the *mboundou*.

this part of the world, it is very seldom that at the death of one of them any body is killed. These poor heathen think no torture cruel enough to inflict upon a wizard. Sometimes the accused will be tied to a tree and burned by a slow fire; at other times they will bind him and put him in the track of an army of bashikouay ants.

I remember the horrid sight I met one day; it made my blood freeze all over. I shall never forget the scene as long as I live. I was hunting in the woods for birds, when I spied two green pigeons (*treron nudirostris*), which I wanted for my collection of birds. By dint of great exertions I penetrated the jungle to the foot of the tree, when lo! a ghastly sight met my eyes. It was the corpse of a woman, young evidently, and with features once mild and amiable. She had been tied up here, on some infernal accusation of witchcraft, and tortured with a cruelty which would have done honor to the Inquisition.

The torture consisted in the laceration of the flesh all over the body, and fresh Cayenne pepper had been rubbed in the gashes. A cold perspiration covered my body; my eyes became dim; "Was it a dream?" I asked myself. The devil himself could not have displayed more ingenuity in torture. I approached the corpse. It was cold. The poor girl was dead. What terrible sufferings she must have endured!

Will you think hard of me when I say to you that I felt I could go into that village of wild men and shoot every one of them?

*Aniemba!* What a terrible meaning that word possesses in the mind of the poor African of Equatorial Africa! To be bewitched is almost certain death. What

an awful superstition! It leads to the most inhuman and abominable acts of cruelty.

How many I have seen of these acts! what refinement of barbarism I have seen displayed! what numbers of poor innocent creatures I have seen slain! what numbers of families have in this way been made unhappy!

## CHAPTER XIV.

A ROYAL FEAST.—ON THE BANKS OF THE OVENGA.—PREPARATIONS.—THE BILL OF FARE.—A TASTE OF ELEPHANT AND A MOUTHFUL OF MONKEY.

A ROYAL feast is to be given to me: a real feast, where the King is going to show me what are the splendors of his kitchen department. That feast is to take place in the equatorial regions of Western Africa, on the banks of the Ovenga River.

King Obindji is to give the repast. My friend King Quengueza and myself will be the guests at the feast, and it promises to be a great affair.

For some time past hunters have gone into the forest to kill and trap game, fishermen have been catching fish, and the women have been watching their plantain-trees and their cassada plantations, while the boys have been scouring the forest to look after wild fruits.

A good deal of pottery has been manufactured, so that they may have plenty of cooking-pots. Earthen jars have also been made in great numbers, so that vessels for palm wine may be abundant. The women have also worked steadily in making mats, so that many might be spread on the ground. Several boloko have been made. What a strange kind of arm-chair those bolokos are! King Obindji delights to rest upon one. A large shade has been built, so that Quengueza and myself will have

plenty of room. Oralas are abundant, and meat has been smoked in abundance during these last few days.

At last the day of the feast has come. There is a great stir in the village. The hunters have all returned, the men have also come back from their fishing excursion, and for the last few days a great quantity of palm wine has been collected. Bakalai chiefs have come from all the surrounding country, with a great number of their wives and of their people; they are all scattered about over the little olakas round the village. After the feast a grand palaver is to come off, and the affairs of the country will be discussed. Friend Quengueza seems to be the King of the Kings, for they all show him great marks of respect.

Toward noon the tables are set. Do not think for a moment that I mean real tables; I mean the mats are laid on the ground. Under our shade several mats are put, and many are scattered under the trees round. Quengueza and I are to eat under the shade, the other chiefs under the trees.

The drums begin to beat, wild songs are sung, and there is a great stir. The wives of the King have all turned cooks, and are all busy; the village seems to be in a blaze of smoke, for every thing is cooking, and soon the repast is to be ready.

All sorts of pleasant odors are coming out of these pots: what curious dishes some of them will be!

The drums are beating furiously again and again. Twenty of the King's wives have come out, each bringing a dish with her, which they deposit on the mats.

Then Obindji came to Quengueza and to me, and bade us come and sit before what was presented to us

and tasted of every dish to show us that no food was poisoned, for such is the custom of the country.

What a curious bill of fare! I must give it to you, and I will try to remember it all.

First, there was a huge pot containing an enormous piece of an elephant, which had been boiling since the day before, so that the meat might be tender. Another dish was the boiled smoked foot of an elephant, which had been specially cooked for me, this being considered by many the best piece.

Then came a large piece of boiled crocodile, the broth of which was recommended to us, lemon juice and Cayenne pepper having been bountifully mixed with it to give it a flavor. Then came a charming monkey, which had been roasted entire on a blazing fire of charcoal. The little fellow seemed to be nothing but a ball of fat, and looked wonderfully like a roasted baby. It was cooked to perfection, and really had a fine flavor.

Then a huge leg of a wild boar made its appearance, the flavor of which was very high, and it must have been killed days before; but these people like their game high; in fact, it is often decomposed when eaten.

Then came the boiled tongue of the *Bos brachicheros*, the wild buffalo. Another dish was boiled buffalo ribs. This latter had been cooked with the ndika, a kind of paste made from the seed of the wild mango fruit; this was put close to me, Quengueza never touching the buffalo meat, some of his ancestors having long ago given birth to a buffalo (at least so he said), and his clan, the Abouya, never taste buffalo.

Then came a dish of smoked mongon (otter); another of antelope, called kambi, and a beautiful little ga-

zelle, called ncheri. These meats had all been smoked a long time. In the centre there were two huge baskets of plantains, which were to be used as bread.

Do not think this is the end of the bill of fare. The fishes are still to come, as well as other African dainties.

An enormous dish of manatee was next brought in, which was immediately followed by another dish of boiled mullet. Then came some land and water turtles. I wondered why a boiled snake had not made its appearance, and also some roast gorilla and chimpanzee, these to be surrounded by a few mice and rats. But these are entirely Bakalai dishes, no Commi eating those animals.

It was a sumptuous feast. Obindji was in his glory, and the drummers sang, "Who can give such a feast to the Ntangani except Obindji? Obindji has a fetich"—they continued singing—"that makes the wild beasts come to him, the fish come to him, the white man come to him!"

Quengueza was seated on one side and I on the other, and round us stood the twenty wives and Obindji's slaves, to wait upon us. Quengueza, who is a great gourmand, took a glance at every dish before him and concluded that he would go into the manatee first, then he would follow up with some fish, and then would pitch into the fat monkey, finishing up with antelope; and he said to me, in his bland and kind manner, that if there was room left he would eat some ncheri (gazelle), but he intended specially to go into the wild boar and the manatee to his heart's content. "Then," said he, close to my ear, "you will give me a little glass of brandy."

I thought I would taste a little of every thing, and bring my stomach to its utmost capacity. Though it was against etiquette, for Obindji could not eat with Quengueza, I told him we had better invite friend Obindji. We called the good fellow, and made him sit with us amid the abundant cheer round us, for all were as merry as they could be.

His Bakalai Majesty was quite proud to eat with a fork which I presented him.

Since Obindji was to eat with us, an addition to the bill of fare—a dish of boiled gorilla—came for his especial benefit; also a dish made of part of a large snake cooked in leaves, the smell of which made Obindji's mouth water.

The people all round us were eating. The first mouthful I put into my mouth caused cheer after cheer to go up. "The ntanga is eating! The ntanga is eating of the elephant!" For I thought I would begin with King Elephant.

It was a pretty tough piece of meat, I assure you; the grain was very coarse, and the meat was somewhat tasteless and rather dry. The boiled elephant's foot was better, and I rather liked it. The elephant meat I did not like; it was really too tough.

Obindji recommended to me a bit of crocodile, and the wife who had cooked it said she had been very careful that there was plenty of Cayenne pepper and of lemon juice, and she was sure the broth was excellent. I must say I did not like the idea of eating of the crocodile, but I wanted to know how it tasted. The flesh was very white—somewhat fishy, I thought—and the grain of the meat coarse. I did not like either the broth

or meat. The former was so terribly hot with Cayenne pepper that it tasted of nothing else. I was glad to get through with the crocodile.

The monkey was perfectly delicious; I had not enjoyed any thing so much for a long time, despite his looking so much like a roasted baby. I am sure no venison at home could have tasted better.

The wild boar was so terribly high that I backed out, but friend Quengueza thought it was exquisite; and when he had finished eating it, he told Obindji's head-wife to keep what was left for him, as he intended to eat the whole of it. At the same time he got up as if he wanted to stiffen himself for more food, and then sat down, saying that he was ready to go on again.

Just for fun I offered to friend Quengueza a piece of the tongue of the buffalo and part of his boiled rib. The old chief recoiled, for none of his clan (the Abouya), as I have said, can eat of this meat, for they have a legend that once one of tneir clan gave birth to such an animal; and if they were to eat of it disease would creep upon them, they would die, and their women would give birth again to such a monster. Quengueza told Obindji that the vessels that cooked the buffalo must be broken, for fear that his wives might cook his food in them.

Every clan has some kind of animal they do not eat. Quengueza assured me that when a boy he saw a woman who had given birth to a crocodile. I scarcely touched the buffalo meat; the otter I did not like. When I came to the antelope my appetite had gone, to my great sorrow, for I am very fond of this dish. I finished up my dinner with a slice of pine-apple. I doubt very much if a more curious dinner could be given anywhere.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE TERRIBLE BASHIKOUAY.—MARCH OF AN ANT ARMY.—THEY BUILD BRIDGES.—THEY ENTER HOUSES.—THEIR HABITS.

One day I was plodding along in the vast forest in search of game, and was suddenly startled by a strange noise falling upon my ears. I heard the footsteps of wild beasts running away. I thought even that I saw the glimpse of a gorilla; I certainly heard distinctly the footsteps of an elephant soon after. At last I heard at a great distance a mighty crash as if elephants were running at great speed through the forest, breaking every thing before them.

What can all this mean? I asked myself; and I knew not why, but a vague feeling of awe began to creep over me. I knew that something strange must have happened or was coming. Were we going to have an earthquake? It could not be a tornado, for we were in the beginning of the dry season.

Finally the insects which had begun to fly at the beginning of this tumult now grew thicker and thicker, when suddenly I was annoyed by fearful bites, and in less time than I have taken to write I was covered by a kind of ants called by the Bakalais *Bashikouay.* I leaped and fled with the utmost haste in the same direction the insects and beasts had taken. An army of bashikouay ants was advancing, and devouring every

living thing in its way. I was almost crazy, for they were in my clothes and on my body, and often when they gave a bite a little piece of flesh would come out.

When I thought I was out of reach I immediately took off my clothes. They had, in their fury, literally buried themselves in these, and their pincers were deep into them; and like the fierce bull-dog of our own country, when once they bite they never let go their hold; and many and many a time their bodies were severed from their head as I pulled them out; their pincers clung still to my flesh.

I defy any living man to stand quiet before an army of bashikouay; he would certainly be killed and devoured. This was incontestably the largest army of bashikouay I have ever seen, and how it swept over the forest, driving every thing before it!

These little ants are more powerful when combined in such an army than any living thing in the forest. All other animate things are put to flight before their march. It is only in the interior that one can have an idea of their number.

I dressed myself again, and began to breathe freely, when lo! these bashikouay were again coming in my direction. So I fled, striking for a path that led to a stream, and at last reached the wet and swampy grounds, which I knew they would not care to approach if they continued to spread and advance in the direction I had taken.

How many and how many times I have been disturbed by these ants in the forests of Africa!

Of all the ants which inhabit the regions I have explored, the most dreaded of all is the bashikouay; it is

very abundant, and is the most voracious creature I have ever met. It is the dread of all living animals, from the elephant and the leopard down to the smallest insect.

At the end of this chapter is the drawing of an ordinary bashikouay, taken by the artist from one of the four I had with me.

No wonder that the animal and insect world flies before them! And now I am going to say a good deal of what I know about them; if I should tell you all, the account would appear so incredible that perhaps you would say it must be untrue; but I write this book to instruct you, and to show you that the ways of Nature are wonderful.

These bashikouay, so far as I have been able to observe, do not build a nest or house of any kind; they wander throughout the year, and seem never to have any rest. They are on the march day and night. I never saw them carry any thing away; they devour every thing on the spot.

It is their habit to march through the forests in a long regular line, just as soldiers would do, and with quite as much order and regularity. The line is about two inches broad, and must be often several miles in length. All along this line are larger ants, who act as officers, standing outside the ranks, and keeping this singular army in order. These officers stand generally with their heads facing their subordinates. They remain thus until their squads have passed, and then join them, while others take their place.

The number of a large army is so great that I should not even dare to enter into a calculation. I have seen one continual line passing at good speed a particular

place for twelve hours. It was sunrise when I saw them, and it was only a little before sunset that their numbers began to diminish. An hour before the end of the column came, it was not so compact, and I could see that these were the stragglers; and many of these stragglers also seemed to be of a smaller size: they were evidently tired. When I saw them in the morning I did not know how long since this vast army of bashikouay had begun their march. This was the largest column I ever saw. You may imagine how many millions on millions there must have been included in this column. I have seen much smaller columns on the march, but it generally required several hours for them to pass.

Strange as it may seem, these ants can not bear the heat of the sun, hence they could not be found in a country where the forests are scarce. If they come to a place where there are no trees to shelter them from the sun, they immediately build underground tunnels, through which the whole army passes in column to the forest beyond. These tunnels are four or five feet underground, and are only used during the heat of the day. I have noticed that these open spaces are often passed by them during the night to the forest beyond.

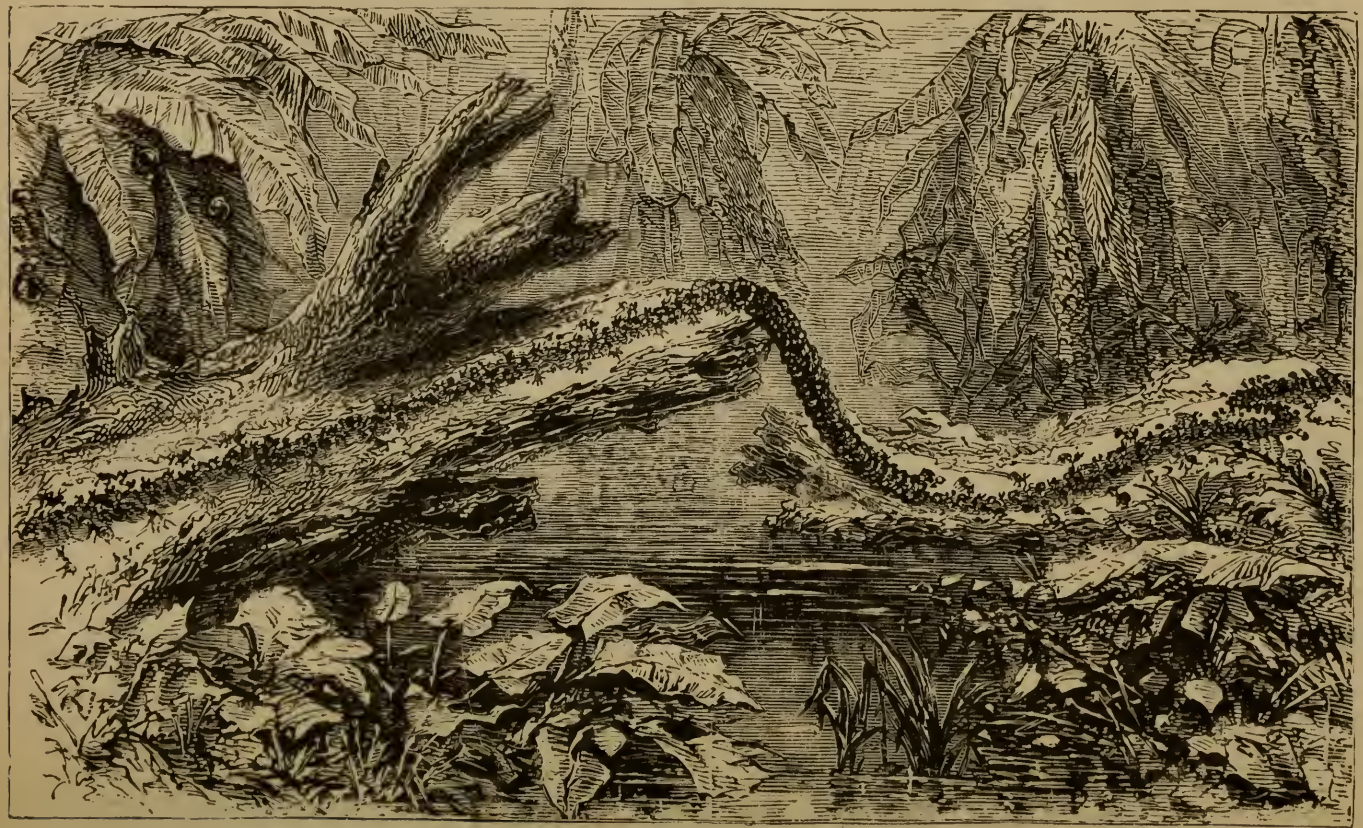
I suppose that these underground tunnels must be numerous; I do not see how otherwise the ants could protect themselves against the heavy rains. I have never seen them lying drowned on the ground after a storm. Hence they must know, when a storm is coming, how to disappear; and generally after a heavy rain these armies are more numerous in the forest, for they probably come in quest of food, of which they have been deprived during their subterranean marches. They always at-

tack with a fury which passes description. Where the soil is sandy, no bashikouay can be found.

When they get hungry the long file spreads and scatters itself through the forest in a front line: how the order reaches from one extremity of the line to the other almost at the same time I can not tell. Then they attack and devour all that comes within their reach with a fury and voracity which is quite astonishing. As I have said, the elephant and gorilla fly before this attack; the leopard disappears from his den; the black men run away for their lives; for who would dare to stand still before such an army? In a very short time any adversary would be overpowered, and I am sure that in about two or three hours nothing would be left of the opposition. Antelopes which I have killed have been stripped of every bit of flesh in that time. At times, when they have spread themselves, they do not advance with rapidity, but seem to go in a rambling sort of a way.

It is said that now and then a man is put to death in the following manner. He is tied to a tree which is in the path of this bashikouay army. What a terrible death it must be!

Every animal that lives on the line of march where they have spread is pursued, and, though instinct seems to indicate the forthcoming danger, many are caught. In an incredibly short space of time the mouse, the insect, and many small animals are overwhelmed, killed, eaten, and their bare skeletons only remain. If they ever get into a fowl-house, it is all over with the fowls. The insects seem to be the greatest sufferers. The ants seem to understand and act upon the tactics of Napoleon, and concentrate with great speed their heaviest forces upon



MARCH OF BASHIKOUAY ANTS.

the point of attack. They must certainly understand each other; but how, we shall never be able to know. Surely there must be commanders for these vast hordes of soldier ants, for when in a line on the march not one will leave the ranks, even though the insects, which they would devour in an instant when spread for a raid, are close by. It is but seldom that they are able to capture antelopes, for these animals run away too fast for them.

As I have said before, they travel night and day. Many a time some of you who have perused my books may have read that I have been roused from sleep and obliged to rush from the hut, sometimes into the water, or at other times have been obliged to protect myself with fires, or by spreading hot ashes or boiling water around me. Often I have suffered terribly from their advanced guard, who had got into my clothes, and who would not get out, and soon managed to get on my body.

When they enter a house they clear it of all living things. Roaches are devoured in an instant. Rats and mice spring round the room in vain. An overwhelming force of ants kills a strong rat in less than a minute or two, and in an incredibly short time, despite the most frantic struggles, its bones are stripped. Every living thing in the house is devoured. Centipedes, scorpions, small spiders can not escape, and of this I was glad. They will not touch vegetable matter. Thus they are in reality very useful; for without them the insects would become so numerous that man would not be able to live. I always rejoiced when they got hold of a serpent, though these are pretty shy, and manage generally to get out of the way, except when they are in a state of torpor.

When on the march the insect world flees before them, and, as you have seen in the beginning of the chapter, I had the approach of a bashikouay army heralded to me by this means. Wherever they go they make a clean sweep, even ascending to the top of many small trees in search of birds'-nests, and to devour the young of caterpillars. They pursue their poor prey with an unrelenting fury, and seem to be animated with the genius of destruction. Their manner of attack is by an impetuous *leap*. Instantly the strong pincers are fastened, and they only let go when the piece seized upon gives way. If they were large they would certainly be the most fearful creature man could ever encounter, and they would destroy all the living creatures of the forest.

When on their line of march they often find little streams—which of course are not very wide; they throw themselves across and form a bridge, a living bridge, connected by two trees or high bushes on opposite sides of the stream. This is done with great care, and is effected by a great number of ants, each of which clings with his fore-claws to his next neighbor's body or hind-claws. Thus they form a high, safe bridge, over which the whole vast regiment marches in regular order. If disturbed, or if the bridge is broken by the violence of some animal, they instantly attack the offender with the greatest animosity.

To find the place for these bridges must require a good deal of sagacity. By one way or another they find a spot where on each side there is a branch of a tree, almost always a dead one, that has fallen on the ground, and which overlaps the stream. Often in falling this tree has broken in two pieces, and the piece on the other

side almost joins it. The branch on the further side must be lower on the ground, so that, as they form the bridge, they begin it from the higher side.

These bashikouay do smell things a long way off, and they are guided by their sense of smell. They are quite large, often the ordinary-sized ones being half an inch long, and are armed with very powerful fore-legs and large strong jaws, or nippers, with which they bite. The head is almost if not quite as large as the body; the large ones are almost one inch in length. The kind of

THE BASHIKOUAY ANT, MAGNIFIED TO TWICE ITS NATURAL SIZE.

which I have spoken is dark brown in color, but I have found in the mountains of the interior a somewhat larger species, almost black, and intensely voracious. Besides these two there is still another species of bashikouay, which I have only met two or three times in the mountains south of the equator. It is of a great size, at least double the size of the one I have just spoken to you about. The body is grayish-white in color, the head of reddish-black; its fangs are very power-

ful, and it is able to make a clean bite out of one's legs. It is thus a very formidable animal, but fortunately its motions are not as quick as those of its fierce brother; for if they were, I do not know what would become of a man in the midst of such an army. It does not march in such vast armies, nor does it precipitate itself upon its prey with such an irresistible fury. In its motions it is almost sluggish. They do not invade villages, or climb trees in pursuit of prey, and they are not so voracious as their fellows before mentioned. If they were, they would doubtless clear the country of every living thing, for they are much more powerful. They are, in fact, to the other ants what whales are to fish. If as ferocious, they would depopulate the country, and would themselves have to starve and then disappear.

Now I have told you about the bashikouay, and feel that I could tell you more; and you may rely implicitly on what I have said, for what I have written is from very close observation. I wish this record of the bashikouay to stand.

Some day civilization may reach Equatorial and Central Africa; then the forest will give place to open fields, and the bashikouay ant will disappear, for it can not bear an open country. Such is the order of nature which God has created, that when a race of men or beasts has gone it will never come back. The mastodon, and those gigantic animals and reptiles which once were, have never reappeared.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE SORROWS OF THE BIRDS.—CURIOUS AFRICAN BIRDS.—THE BARBATULA DU CHAILLUI.—THE BARBATULA FULIGINOSA.—THE SYCOBIUS NIGERRIMUS.

Now I must speak to you of little birds!

I do love birds. They are Nature's beautiful creatures.

They are one of God's loveliest creations.

They cheer us in our lonely hours, when from their bowers their songs come upon our ears and gladden our hearts. Their melodies have often told me how happy they were, and how much one bird loved the other. They are the poets of nature

Oh, little birds, I have often wondered how many sorrows you have! Pain I know you have. The shrill cries and plaintive notes I have often heard from you have told me that your little breasts felt the pangs of anguish. The hurried flights which I have often watched have said how anxious you were.

In our Northern climes, when the leaves have withered, when the cold winds blow, when the snow covers the earth, I know that you suffer from hunger, and I feel so sorry for you. When you come by the window you seem to say—"Do feed me, for I am so hungry and so cold!"

I have crossed the seas, and hundreds of miles away

from land I have seen you, in your forlorn flight, looking in vain for the way that might lead to a land where your poor little bodies and tired wings and tiny little feet could find rest. The storm and the winds had carried you away from the land where you were accustomed to rejoice and sing, and taken you above that ocean on which you looked with such dread, and which is always ready to engulf you. You were so tired that you had not even the strength to utter your cries. How then I pitied you, for I thought of the days and sleepless nights you had spent over the vast sea! how weary those little wings of yours were! how painful must have been each effort you made to support you in the air. How sad must have been your thoughts, for you could see nothing to guide you to that place you longed to reach!

I have seen you when the good ship was close at hand. How welcome its sight seemed to be to you, who had suffered so much from thirst, hunger, and starvation, fatigue and exhaustion! and, as I watched your coming, I could detect joy and fear; for how strange the vessel appeared to you, how strange its ropes, how strange its sails.

When I have thought its masts and ropes would afford you rest, and seen you ready to reach them, you have dropped on the waves to rise no more. How you struggled before you came to this! You almost touched the water, when another effort would send you flying high above the sea; then again your flight became weaker; gradually you came down and made another frantic effort to escape by flight. At last you seemed not to know any longer what you were doing, and despite all your valiant struggles for life your doom came, and you

dropped into the waves; and as the vessel sailed away I left you to your sad fate. At other times you fell on deck, for you were not strong enough to perch. Then how your bright little eyes became dim, for the touch of death was soon to close them, despite the care and the little water I would give you. How sweetly you looked as you laid still in the embrace of death! The storms of your life were over, your sorrows were ended, and your merry songs were to be heard no more in the groves you used to love. I know of nothing sweeter to look at than a dead little bird! and yet there is nothing which more pathetically touches my heart.

When the eagle, the hawk, and the falcon soar high in the sky, I know that they are your enemies. When the snake glides from branch to branch in search of your nest, to destroy your offspring, I know that pain will reach your heart. When you and your mate are flying above the earth, perchance a heartless sportsman appears, and with his gun brings one of you down. How I have seen you follow the unfortunate one in its downward flight! How painful to hear were your cries; how you tried to arrest the fall of the poor wounded one, and how touching was the scene as you soared and soared above the body of the little victim who had fallen on the ground. So plaintive were your cries that they ought to have disarmed the ruthless hand that separated you, so that he would say to himself—"I will nevermore kill a harmless little bird, for God has given them to us to cheer, to enliven the nature that surrounds us." When night comes, and your mate does not return, how anxious and sad you seem to feel! Perhaps a cruel cat, or some wild animal has destroyed his life. How often I have

heard you call for the missing one, and could detect despair in the tone of your voice!

When the young fall from the nest I have watched your anxiety, and when danger threatened them I have seen you brace up your courage; and how angry then you did look, with your little feathers all standing out as if you were ready for a fight! When the storms had tumbled down the little nest you had built with so much trouble, how distressed you seemed to be, and how industrious you were to build another one! So, little birdies, I found that, like man, you have your joys, your cares, your troubles, and your sorrows. The stormy billows of life are also for you. I love you the more for this. I wish I were a poet, so that my lyre could sing songs to you, and I might tell you a softer tale than that which the nightingale tells to us.

Dear little birds, I thank you for all the joys you have given me during my wanderings. Your songs and melodies have often cheered me when wearied and lonely. Your plumage I have admired, and often have I exclaimed—"Little birds, how beautiful you are!" I thank you for the many days I have passed pleasantly while watching you; for I love dearly to look at you, to study your habits, to see how nice and loving you are. Many times I have said to myself, when admiring you—"Little birdie, do come to me, so that I may kiss thee and feel thy little beak upon my lips." O God, how kind to man thou art! for he is able to understand thy works. The wonders of thy creation he can admire, so that he may praise thee for thy goodness.

And now I will speak to you of some little birds of which we knew nothing, of little birds that had no name,

and wandered unknown to civilized man, till he who has written this book saw them and brought them here.

In a forest of Equatorial Africa, on the banks of the Ovenga River not far from Obindji Village, there was a plantation where birds came every day. There were many curious kind of birds there, and many I had never seen before. The time to see them was early in the morning, before the sun became so hot that they had to retire in the forest, or in the afternoon after the sun was hidden by the hills. But the morning was the best time. The natives had no name for many of these birds. Among the most curious ones were the fly-catchers, the stranger bee-eaters, the queer crimpers, and some very strange woodpeckers; while flying over them all were some nice little black swallows that were very pretty indeed. I remember how much I loved in the morning to go over that plantation and watch them all, so that I might learn their habits and tell you something about them.

Among the strangest of them all there was one that especially attracted my attention. As I approached the plantation I could hear, just on the edge of the forest, a noise that sounded very much as if some far-away people were hammering at something, or I should rather say, as if people were hammering at a tree. I carefully approached the place. I am sure you could not have heard my steps on the ground, so carefully I approached. I was dressed in a dark-blue suit of cotton goods, so that the birds might not notice me. At last I recognized the noise as coming from old friends of mine. They were birds that were hammering at two or three dead trees in such earnest that none of them observed me.

It was a very pretty sight! The country being nothing else than a gigantic forest, of course, wherever a village or plantation is made, the trees have to be cut down, and nearly all are cut from a height of ten or fifteen feet. These in the course of time become dry, and after being dead a sufficient time the wood softens, and becomes the object of the attack of the beautiful little bird I am writing about. It is really a beautiful bird, and was unknown before I brought it here. It has been named the *Barbatula du Chaillui.* The throat and breast are of a glossy blue-black color; the head is scarlet; a line of canary yellow from above the eyes surrounds the neck, and the back, which is black, is covered with canary yellow spots. Above the bill it has what might be termed two little brushes.

The trunks of the trees on which they were so busily engaged were within a few yards of the forest. These birds were hard at work with their bills, pecking out circular openings about two inches in diameter. It was a tedious operation, and now and then a little bird had to rest, or its mate would come and take its place. Their little feet are constructed like those of the woodpeckers, to whom they are somewhat related, but their bill is much thicker, stronger, and shorter, hence better adapted to make holes in the trunks of trees.

It was very interesting to see them holding to the trees, sometimes with their heads upward and sometimes with their heads downward. Some had just begun to work at the aperture, others had already made a pretty deep hole, and the end of their tail only could be seen, while still others were working inside, and their bodies could not be seen at all, though now and then

they came forth, bringing the wood they had pecked out.

What difficult and patient toil! The making of one of these nests requires many days. It is no easy work for birds a little bigger than a sparrow to peck out a circular opening of two inches in diameter, and more than

THE BARBATULA WORKING.

two inches deep. This done, they dig perpendicularly down for about four inches. The cavity thus made is their nest. As they are small birds, it takes them a long time to finish this piece of carpentering—often two or three weeks. There the female lays her eggs and hatches

them in security, no snake or wild animal being able to disturb them.

Not only do they use these nests while they are hatching, but also during the rainy season. How cosy they must feel in these places of refuge when a storm is raging! Nothing could be safer, or better shelter them from the rain. The aperture being about two inches in thickness before you come to the perpendicular hollow, of course the rain can not reach the inside.

I have seen trees entirely perforated by them; that is to say, having more than a dozen of these holes in them; and thus forming what we may call a little village of themselves. I wonder if they had a king! These birds are very shy, and the least noise will frighten them. How affectionate the pair seemed to be, how willing they were to help each other in their work!

There is also another species of *Barbatula* which I have discovered, of a gray color, called now *Barbatula fuliginosa*, of the same habits, but found in greater numbers. I have seen colonies of them, composed of thirty or forty nests, on the same tree.

The picture given by the artist represents the birds working and making their nests.

Now I must speak to you of another bird, a very curious one, the *Sycobius nigerrimus*, which is found in almost if not all the regions I have explored in Equatorial Africa. The habits of this bird are most extraordinary. They are extremely sociable birds; the woods or the uninhabited plantations have no charm for them; they must be where people live, and hence they prefer always to live in the neighborhood of a village. If there are trees in the middle of the village they will live there, or on the trees

AFRICAN HANGING BIRDS NESTS.

back of the huts, and not far from where the palm or plantain trees abound; but man must be in sight, for they seem to love his society.

In some villages they are found in immense numbers, often there are several hundreds of nests on the same tree, but it depends on the size of the tree. I have seen several thousands of nests on a single tree, of which they take entire possession for years. The *Sycobii* are a little larger than sparrows, and the habits of these little twitterers are so remarkable that I never wearied of watching their curious ways, and very skillful and intelligent manœuvres in nest-building or in gathering food. A native village would lose a great charm without them. In many villages of the interior, where people do not move about, trees are planted specially for them, and it is considered an ill omen if they do not come. They make such a noise from morning till night that sometimes it is almost impossible to hear when close to them; the harder at work they are the more noise they make.

There are two species, but both live in the same trees and associate indiscriminately with each other, though not, of course, in the same nests. The male of one species is entirely black, and the female a dark gray, while in the other the male is yellow, with black and yellow throat. The eggs of the first mentioned are bluish, with black spots, while those of the other species are light pink, with dark spots. Both kinds of eggs are very beautiful.

They are singularly industrious birds: they seem never to weary of work. When they have settled upon a tree on which to plant a colony, they labor from daylight till dark, day after day, with seemingly the utmost joy, fun, and perseverance at their very singular pendent nests.

The nest is round in shape, or nearly so, with a narrow passage for entrance and exit leading down one side and opening beneath. It is securely fastened to an outstretched twig, and I have sometimes counted in one tree more than two thousand of such pendent little balls, each inhabited by a family, male and female, of these birds; and once I am sure I saw four or five thousand of these nests. This I saw in the Ishogo country, of which I may speak to you one of these days. The birds when building strip the leaf off the palm, or plantain, or banana tree. They split the leaf into very narrow strips, not more than two or three lines wide, but through the whole length of the leaf in the palm, and the whole breadth of the leaf in the plantain, beginning from the rib.

Male and female both work at gathering this material, and every piece is brought up to the tree. How strangely they look as they fly with them from the place where they took them to that where their colony is situated! It seems as if they were carrying away a long, narrow ribbon. The pendent twig having been chosen, the birds begin to turn their leaf-strips over the twig, and to interlace them below in such a way as to enable the finished nest to shed rain. The birds work with the greatest assiduity with both beak and feet, sometimes with the head up, sometimes with the head down. Often I would see one little fellow one minute holding by his feet and working the strips in with his bill, the next suspended by his bill and pushing all together with his feet, then adroitly slipping inside, and by pushing and working with his body giving the nest a round shape. The entrance is the last made, and they are knowing enough to build its mouth down, so that the inside may be sheltered from the rains,

which I can assure you pour down in good earnest in these equatorial regions. A few leaves are put inside where the eggs are to be laid.

Sometimes trees on which these industrious little fellows build are quite killed by the weight of so many nests, and by the space they occupy preventing the regular growth of the branches. The nests are not only used to breed in, but also to live in, and each pair breeds several times a year, raising two young ones in a brood. Of course, with such a rapid increase, they are always needing new nests, so that the building process is going on almost all the time.

The nests looked all alike to my eyes, yet each bird was always able to find its own. But sometimes I noticed a strong fellow trying with might and main to oust one of his weaker brethren from his home, or to drive him from the work he had begun; then there was a downright fight for possession.

They have a foreknowledge of the rainy season evidently, for just before this sets in they are particularly active in building and repairing, and at such a time the village where they have settled is alive with their merry twittering and active bustle.

Of course, during the dry or cold season very little building is going on.

I shall always have a pleasant recollection of these *Sycobii*, and no one was ever allowed to disturb them at Washington, where I had three or four little trees full of their nests. The natives like to see them round them, and no village is thought to be perfect without them.

## CHAPTER XVII.

ON THE OFOUBOU RIVER.—ELEPHANTS BATHING.—PURSUIT THROUGH THE SWAMP.—ESCAPE OF THE ELEPHANTS.

If you could have visited me, you would have found me on the banks of the Ovenga River, at the village of my Bakalai friend Obindji.

Numbers of canoes, made each from the trunk of a single tree, are on the river-bank. My friend Quengueza is giving his orders for the comfort of Ntangani: "his friend Paul" is going away with him.

We are going to leave, for there is nothing more to eat at friend Obindji's. Game has become scarce, elephants and gorillas have destroyed their plantations, and disappeared. We are too kind-hearted, however, to tell good Obindji that we are obliged to leave his village because we are hungry every day.

We are going to ascend the Ofoubou River, which is one of the affluents of the Ovenga, and are bound for the village of Njali-Coudié. This is a strange name to give to a town, but there are many strange names in this country. I hope you will be able to pronounce them according to the African standard, and that you will remember them.

Obindji is on the beach, beating his *kendo* (the royal sceptre) and invoking the spirits of his ancestors to pro-

tect his friend Quengueza, and his Ntanga (white man). He is covered with fetiches, and has rubbed his body with the chalk of the Alumbi.

The *kendo* is the badge of royalty in some of these tribes of Africa. I will give you a description of the *kendo*. It is a rude ball of iron, fashioned with a long handle, also of iron, and of the same piece. The sound which with us announces the vicinity of a herd of cows or sheep, in Africa precedes the advent of the sovereign, who uses the *kendo* only when on visits of state or on business of importance.

When they wear the *kendo* it is on the shoulder, and there is put over it the skin of a genetta, in which some of the Alumbi powder is kept.

In this case friend Obindji thought it was very important that the spirits of his ancestors should follow us. He wanted good wishes to precede us. Hence he said, he hoped we would have plenty to eat, and that I would kill all the game I wanted.

Obindji was really in earnest, and jabbered away in a manner and with an eagerness that was laughable; he had certainly plenty of faith in the powers he was invoking.

The canoes were ready, and soon friend King Quengueza gave the order for our departure. His Majesty was in his royal travelling costume. He had on a coat which I had given him, but no shirt; he had a cravat round his neck, and instead of pantaloons, which, by the way, I had never been able to make him wear, he had a cloth round his waist. His bag hung over his shoulder, and in this was his *ogana* (idol); there also he had a good supply of tobacco, his pipes, and several other

things, among which were articles for the toilet of his Majesty, such as a little calabash of palm-oil to rub on his skin to soften it, and to give to some of his wives when he wished to be particularly amiable.

In this journey his Majesty thought he would have ten wives to accompany him, and to provide for his comfort; and though King Quengueza was, I should judge, at least seventy-five, the oldest among these ten wives could not have been more than fourteen years of age, and he had left a few behind still younger than these.

Quengueza and I, with two of the favorite wives, including a Bakalai one, were in the royal canoe, at the head of which was a drummer. I fired a salute, and soon a bend of the river hid us from Obindji's view. The drums were beating, and all the men were singing. All the other canoes paddled in front of us except one, which kept in the rear.

The starry flag floated gracefully in the royal canoe. Quengueza was wonderfully pleased with the flag. We entered the Ofoubou River and fired another gun, the echo of which resounded from hill to hill, and started the roar of a gorilla, which could not have been half a mile distant from where we were. That fellow was certainly a large male gorilla.

The Ofoubou was a narrow river, but deep at that time of the year: trees and palm lined its banks, which it had overflowed, spreading its waters over the strip of lowlands which bounded it, and which separated it from the hills.

Njali-Coudié was situated about ten miles distant from the banks of the Ofoubou. By-and-by the singing ceased, and we paddled silently along, when suddenly one of the

canoes ahead made us a sign to be very quiet. "What is going on?" I whispered to Quengueza. Quengueza in a low voice replied, "I know not." Every man looked carefully at his gun. The canoe ahead had stopped, neither retreating or advancing. What could it be? We pulled with the utmost care; our paddles, as they dipped into the water, made no noise at all, and at last we all met

Then Adouma, the king's nephew, came and whispered low—"Elephants are here, they are bathing in the river. I have heard them."

"Are you sure they are elephants?"

"Are they not hippopotami?" I asked.

"No," he replied, "they are elephants."

The countenances of all the fellows brightened up; the ivory tusks of the noble beast were, they thought, already in their possession—they were selling the skin of the fox before having killed the animal.

We let all our canoes pass down the stream a little way, in order that we might hold a grand palaver. Adouma, Quabi, Rapero, all Quengueza's nephews, were present. Querlaouen and Malaouen, the two most redoubtable warriors of the Bakalai of the Ovenga, were also there; these five, with Quengueza and myself, formed the Grand Council.

Quengueza, being an old man, was to remain where he was with all the party, while myself and the five others were to move in a canoe and make land near where the elephants were.

Immediately the fellows covered themselves with their fetiches; Querlaouen and Malaouen bled their hands, and then we looked carefully at our guns. Though we were more than one hundred men altogether, the falling of a

leaf could have been heard by any one of us, the silence was so profound.

The canoe that was to take us came. Adouma and Quabi paddled, and onward we went until we reached a bend of the river, and I could distinctly hear the elephants. So we thought best to land inside of the bend, which we did without uttering a whisper for fear of alarming the elephants. After landing the great difficulty was how to gain the other side. The country was overflowed, it was all bog-land, yet to the elephants we must go. We could not possibly follow the edges of the forest that bordered the Ofoubou, for we should have soon found ourselves in twenty feet of water, and in the middle of a strong current. These bog-lands are always dangerous things on the banks of the overflowed African rivers.

I hung my powder-flask close to my neck, and also my watch, in case the water should be deep, for I am not tall. My men took the same precaution with their bags, and then Malaouen took the lead. Where we landed there was no dry spot, and as we advanced through the woods we immediately found ourselves entangled in the midst of the roots of the trees, with the water above our waists, sinking knee deep into the mud, ignorant at every step whether the next might bring us into water up to our necks or above our heads. That was about as difficult a tramp as I ever had had in all my travels. Suddenly Querlaouen's foot caught under some roots, and down he went into the water, gun and all. He immediately swore in Bakalai that somebody had bewitched him, and did not want him to kill an elephant. Finally we came to a place where the water reached my neck, I being the shortest of all; so I took my watch and powder in one hand and

my gun in the other, raising both arms as high as I could, and at every moment I fully expected to go down. One step more and the water just reached my mouth, but happily the next step took me on higher ground.

At last we succeeded in crossing the bend, and came in sight of the elephants, who did not observe our approach.

They were seven altogether. What a huge beast the male was! The other six were all females, so said Malaouen. They were perfectly unconscious of our

HUNTING ELEPHANTS.

presence, and swam to and fro in the narrow river. Unfortunately they were very far from us, being very nearly half a mile off, and to come to a good shooting distance in this awful swamp would take some time.

Their large ears contrasted singularly with the small ears of their Asiatic brethren; they were also somewhat smaller. Several of them had huge tusks of ivory;

those of the bull were gigantic. They were bathing, and evidently enjoying themselves.

We now followed with great care the banks of the river about ten or fifteen yards inside of them, until at last the water became so deep that we came to a halt. How sorry we felt! I would have given much if I could have come near the elephants; but as we approached the banks we saw the elephants leaving the river. What monsters they seemed! I shouldered my long-range rifle, aimed at the big male, with but little hope of killing it, as I must have been several hundred yards off. I fired, heard the bullet strike one of the tusks, when the animals plunged into the forest, breaking down every thing before them.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

NJALI-COUDIÉ.—AN AFRICAN TOWN.—THE CHIEF.—COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE IN AFRICA. — BUYING A WIFE. — QUARREL OVER THE SPOILS.

Now, after many wanderings, I find myself in the very large village of Bakalai called Njali-Coudié. Often I wonder that I have not been murdered by these Bakalai, for they are very treacherous, and life seems to them to be of no value.

The village of Njali-Coudié is situated in the very hilly country between the Ofoubou and Ovenga Rivers. It was one of the largest Bakalai villages I had ever seen. The people were wild; their houses were small, very small indeed, and built with the bark of trees. It was surrounded by large plantain groves and clusters of sugar-cane.

The name of the chief of that strange village was Mbango, and a fine savage he was. His hair and his beard were white. Round his waist was a piece of grass-cloth; by his side hung a tremendous war-knife; and on each of his ankles he wore two tremendous iron rings. Round his neck he wore some *monda* fetich, which he thought could protect him from evil spirits and from being bewitched. Round him hung some charmed powder, preserved in the skin of a wild animal. Around his chest he wore a strip of leopard's skin, which his peo-

ple believed could never be pierced by spears or arrows. So we might say that King Mbango thought himself invulnerable.

The people of the village were a hard set of quarrelsome-looking fellows. The women were not beautiful, indeed they were very ugly; and even King Mbango's head-wife was far from being a belle. She was a tall woman; her teeth were filed to a point; her hair was anointed profusely with palm-oil; her face was all tattooed; and on each side of her cheek, a little below the eye, there were two round spots of flesh of the size of a quarter of a dollar. They had succeeded in raising the flesh, and it must have required a good deal of skill. On her chest any amount of fantastical tattooing could be seen; even her back was not free from this ornamentation. Such is the faithful picture of Mbango's head-wife, whose name I have forgotten. She wore several brass anklets, and also several bracelets. King Mbango had a score of wives besides her, but she was the first woman he had married; hence she was the Queen—the foremost of them all. When Mbango married a new wife, she gave her advice and told her how she must love Mbango, how she must obey him, how laboriously she must cultivate the soil in order to bring food to her husband, and how she must often fish in order to feed her lord well. If she does all this, the king will say, "This wife really loves me." But if she does not, beware! If she is lazy, the lash of whips made from the hide of the hippopotamus, or of the manatee, will remind her of her duties, and of the love she owes to her husband.

Do not think for a moment that women in that far-off country of which I speak to you choose their husbands

Nothing of the sort! When a girl is born among the Bakalai, while she is still a child she is often betrothed, and now and then she goes to the village where her future husband lives. Her mother or her father will take her there, and after a while she comes back to her home, and this continues until she is finally given away. As she grows older she visits her intended husband less frequently, while he, on the other hand, comes oftener to the village of her parents.

You will ask me how they get betrothed or engaged. No ring is given. The man who comes to ask the girl comes first to talk the matter over. He brings a few presents, say a goat or a few fowls, and a few jars of palm wine, and places them at the feet of the girl's father. Then he begins a long rigmarole, and if he could he would go as far back as Adam. At first he speaks at random, talking to somebody else all the time, for they never speak directly to the person they address. Thus he goes on for a couple of hours before he comes to the point. In the mean time the presents are still lying before the father. The whole people of the village are there listening, and approving or disapproving by grunts. The man gets tremendously excited, and begins to halloo until he is covered with perspiration. After he has finished there is a pause. Somebody else gets up, and pleads sometimes for the suitor, and sometimes in behalf of the villagers or relatives to whom the girl belongs.

At last the father gets up, and he tries to play a shrewd game. He never means what he says; he talks not to the suitor but to one that has come with him, for it is the fashion here, as I have said, never to speak directly

to the person whom you wish to address. He seems astonished that a man is bold enough to ask his beautiful daughter in marriage. He sings her praises, generally pockets the presents, and says he will think about it.

After this palaver the relations on the mother's and the father's side are presented with the amount for which the girl is sold; and when the final agreement has been made, the spoils are divided among the two families.

This is the way girls are given in marriage in this part of the world.

Mbango had a beautiful girl, whom he seemed to love dearly, and she was not betrothed. One day a fellow came from a neighboring village. He had with him a slave to give to Mbango, several jars of palm wine, a goat, some native tobacco coming from a country of the interior, called Asbira, and he put all these things at the feet of Mbango, who was seated on a stool and ready to hear him. After having talked a long time, he presented his slave, his goat, and all the presents he had brought with him to the King, and asked his daughter in marriage.

Old Mbango got up and pretended to be in a furious rage, but it was all sham; he kicked and broke the jars of palm wine. How could a man come and presume to offer him only one slave for his daughter, she who was sought after by so many suitors? He could not believe his ears; and Mbango went roaming about, brandishing his cane. In the mean time the poor fellow had fled in dismay, leaving his slave, his goat, and all his presents behind.

Mbango's pretended anger was a humbug. He wanted more presents, and appeared highly indignant. So the next day the suitor came back, and brought with him another slave he had kept in reserve, guessing that King

Mbango would not be satisfied with one. He knew well that it required more than one in order to marry the daughter of a chief, and he wanted to get his bride as cheap as he could. Mbango looked very stern. How had he dared to come with one slave only? Did he think his daughter was good for nothing?

Mbango was far more gentle. He took the other slave, and then said that one more would settle the bargain—then he could take his bride with him.

The next day another slave came; the man swore that his uncle gave the man to him, though I learned afterward that he had that third slave ready, but that he thought that two slaves would do. The share of Mbango for his daughter was two slaves, and that of the relatives of the mother of the girl was one slave; and Mbango, wishing to appear generous, gave them the goat. The relatives on the mother's side of the girl tried to get two slaves out of the three; it was a hard palaver, and lasted several days, but Mbango was inexorable—he must have two slaves for his share.

There was no ceremony. The man took his bride with him, and after a few days she was to return to her father.

## CHAPTER XIX.

THE FEAST OF NJAMBAI. — THE TALKING IDOL. — SECRET PROCEEDINGS. — THE WOMEN AND THEIR MYSTERIES.

THE village of Njali-Coudié became full of strangers, so full indeed that many could not find shelter there, hence little olakos were surrounding the village everywhere.

When I inquired the cause why so many strangers were in the village, I was told that the Njambai feast was coming.

The first night I could not sleep, as no African feast is complete without shouting, drumming, singing, dancing, and a good deal of drinking, when the latter can be got. The noise was terrific; more than one hundred tam-tams must have been beating.

At last I got up and went into the street. It was crowded with men, women, and children. Fires and torches lighted it up, and gave a strange appearance to the savages, who were painted in different colors.

Seeing a great crowd, I went there, and I saw in the middle of the street a large wooden idol. It was a female figure, nearly of life size, and with cloven feet like those of a stag. Her eyes were of copper; one cheek was painted red, and the other yellow. About her neck hung a necklace of leopard's teeth. This idol is said to have great power, and the people believe that on certain occa-

sions she nods her head. She is said to talk quite frequently—as might, indeed, be expected. She is very highly venerated by the people. Before her stood plantains, sugar-cane, and a piece of antelope. The people were dancing around her, singing most furiously and drumming with tremendous force. They were so much excited and so much in earnest that their bodies were bright and shiny; for the oil their skin naturally possesses comes out so abundantly that one might have thought they had dipped themselves in it. The perfume was not particularly pleasant, but I had become accustomed to it.

How wild the scene, how wild the men as they danced round! They looked almost like demons. Sometimes a single man would come forth and dance before the idol, making the most horrid contortions possible, and, speaking to her, would vanish again. This idol belonged to the clan of which Mbango was the chief, and had been in their possession as far back as they had any remembrance. The clan of Mbango includes half a dozen large villages within a circuit of thirty miles; hence the idol of the clan remains with him. But that night there was no nodding and no talking of the idol. The people began to be frightened, and their ignorant doctors were at their wits' end, and did not know what to do.

On the night of the two following days there was a dead silence and a great darkness: no fire was allowed in the village, no torch could be lighted. The only light was mine, and that was closely shut up in my hut.

What a strange scene! Not a voice could be heard; for he who should have dared to talk would have probably paid with his life for his rashness.

Two or three times a strange feeling of awe took hold of me, for I stood alone in the midst of this wild people, and what could be wilder than these superstitious scenes? It is not wonderful that these poor weak creatures, in sight of such idols as they have, are frightened even at themselves.

The Mbuiti was set out in the middle of the street, and the people stood round her in the pitchy darkness. She is said to have bowed, walked about, and spoken to some one, expressing her pleasure at two gazelles that had been offered to her. She ate some of the meat—so I was assured—and left the rest for the people.

Yes! they all believed the reports which I have just related to you. I felt very sorry that the mind of man could be so debased. What they asked of the idol I have never been able to find out; they were unwilling to tell me. At any rate, they were pleased, for they thought the idol had spoken, had nodded, and had eaten.

Now let us come to Njambai. Njambai is a spirit, a very good spirit, who protects the women. All the tribes I have visited believe in him or her, though with all the name is not the same. All the women venerate Njambai. This worship of the women is a kind of mystery, no men being admitted to the ceremonies, which are carried on in a house very carefully closed. This house was covered with dry palm and banana leaves, and had not even a door open to the street. To make all close, so as to prevent the eyes of man from penetrating into it, it was set against two other houses, and the entrance was through one of these, so that complete darkness reigned in the house of Njambai. Mbango and friend Quengueza warned me not to go to the

place, for the King said—"Ntanga, I myself can not go and have a look."

The feast of Njambai takes place once a year.

The women had come from all the villages round; they had come for the Njambai feast. They had all painted their faces and bodies, were beating drums, and marching about the town. Now and then they would all go into the forest, whence I could hear their wild songs. From time to time they entered the Njambai-house, where they danced inside and outside; and one night they made a most outrageous noise, far greater than even the men had made when I came to the village.

I thought it pretty hard not to be able to sleep. After a few days I began to feel the need of it, but I did not wish to go and make my camp in the woods, for I wanted to see the feast of Njambai. The men were hunting all the time, and all the game they killed or caught they brought to the women, who offered them all to Njambai.

On the second day they nearly all went off into the woods, and their songs were something wonderful. Now and then I could hear the name of Njambai. I noticed that in the morning a few had entered the Njambai-house, where they remained, keeping a mysterious silence. Now my curiosity, which had been greatly excited to know what took place in that secret worship, finally overcame me. I resolved to see the inside of this house if I could. I fancy many of you would have done the same.

I walked several times up and down the street to avoid suspicion. Looking round and seeing nobody, I

went quietly by the house, and at last suddenly pushed aside some of the leaves that formed the walls and stuck my head through it. For a moment I could distinguish nothing in the darkness. Then I beheld three perfectly naked old hags sitting on the clay floor, with an immense bundle of greegrees or fetiches before them, which they seemed to be contemplating in silent adoration.

INTERIOR OF THE NJAMBAI-HOUSE.

I was put aback, for I expected to see no one. As soon as their fear and wonder had somewhat subsided, they set up a hideous howl of rage, and rushed out to call their companions in the bush. In a few minutes these came rushing toward me with gesture of anger, and threatening me for my offense. I quickly reached

my house, and, seizing my gun in one hand and my revolver in the other, told them I would shoot the first one that came inside my door. I never saw such an infuriated set. My house was surrounded by above three hundred angry women, every one shouting out curses at me; and still they kept coming in, their number every moment growing greater and greater.

King Mbango came to the rescue. I was glad of it, for I had never been in such a predicament before. I had never faced in my life an angry mob of women before; and here there were hundreds of them before me, who seemed ready to tear my eyes out of my head, or commit such other gentle little deeds as I certainly thought no female could attempt.

Presently they went back to the Njambai-house, and I felt quite relieved. I had become almost deaf, and had wondered how I should get out of the scrape.

At last a deputation of the women came to King Mbango and to Quengueza, who told the women I was their guest. The women did not wish to yield, but at last King Mbango and his male subjects came one by one and put their offerings before the women. These consisted of grass-cloth, knives, plates, bracelets, anklets, etc., etc. With these the angry women were appeased, and there the quarrel ended. Of course I could not make any further investigations into their mysteries. I was watched very closely, and Mbango came and implored me not to go again, saying—"The wrath of Njambai may come upon us!"

The Njambai feast lasted about two weeks. I could learn very little about the spirit which they call by this name. It protects the women against their male enc-

mies, avenges their wrongs, and serves them in various ways.

What I have told you is all I know about it, but I thought it might interest you as it did me. I only hope that, whenever you travel, it will never happen to you to have several hundreds of infuriated women after you, for I can assure you that I would have rather encountered a gorilla of the worst kind than to face them.

## CHAPTER XX.

SICK IN A STRANGE LAND.—ADVENTURE WITH A SNAKE.—HOW A SQUIRREL WAS CHARMED.

I WAS in the forest, under a large tree, very ill. I had been sick with a fever for some weeks, and all the medicine I had taken seemed to do me no good. Little by little my strength gave way. The days and the nights seemed so long! I am sure that if you had seen me you would have pitied me. There I was in that great forest, which was full of wild men and still wilder beasts. How helpless, how sad, how lonely I felt!

The hand of death was close upon me. Looking at myself in the looking-glass, the sunken and pallid cheeks told how much I had suffered. My eyes grew dim, and I began to realize that soon my days were to be ended, and that I was to die in that desert place, far away from home and friends, and that the wild beasts of the woods would come and devour me.

My bed was made of leaves, my pillow was the branch of a tree. Instead of blankets I had two fires, but I was so burning hot the greater part of the time with fever that I cared not for these. Close to me lay my little Bible, on my small and now almost empty medicine chest, but I could only look at it, for I could not read any more;

there were a few books also, and a few old newspapers from New York.

Over my bed was a covering of leaves to protect me from the rains.

At last I was too feeble to rise and quench my thirst in the little stream near where my camp was made, or to go there and bathe my burning head. So the kind women got water and bathed my head. I could not eat, for I had nothing. At times I thought that if I could only have a little piece of dry bread, how much I should relish it! I could bear the plantains and the wild berries and fruits no longer. There were days when I felt so lonely, so wretched, so poor, so helpless, that the tears rolled down my cheeks. The days of my boyhood came back before me, for they had been happy days. Then, instead of a piece of wood, I had a soft pillow to lay my head upon; then there were gentle hands that caressed me when I was sick. Where was that cosy little bed now? What a contrast! I thought of the friends of my youth—of little Lucy, of Julia, and Laura, and Jessie. What had become of beautiful little Lottie, with her fair hair, and of charming little Maggie, with her dark hair? What friends we had once been! Lottie had been like a sister to me. I wondered if they thought sometimes of me, or if some of them might have gone to heaven. What had become of them? I knew that, if they were by, they would take care of "little Paul," as they used to call me.

I remembered the ladies that were so kind to me when I had no mother to care for me; I knew that if I had any thing good and amiable in my nature they had taught it to me.

Where were all my playmates? How we would have

laughed if any one had said that little Du Chaillu would one day go into unknown countries, where no white man had been before, and there spend the best days of his life, and be, as his fathers of old were, a *chevalier errant.*

I remembered my two tiny little black ponies which my father had given me, and how kind he had been to me, and I also remembered my good nurse Rosee. My heart was sore and heavy, and I could not help thinking of the happy days gone by; for I was but three-and-twenty, with the world still bright before me, when I was thus sick and lonely.

The stars peered through the dark foliage of the forest trees. How beautiful and bright they looked, reminding me of the heavens whither our spirits go! I thought of my mother, and where she might be, and wondered if she could see me as I lay alone in that dark forest under the big tree. I remember how I said, Oh, my mother, my heart is sore and weary, I want to come to thee!

Such were often my thoughts when lying so ill under the big tree. I knew not if I should see the morrow. So I prayed God to care for me.

One day, after feeling so sad, I went to sleep; when I awoke my Bakalai men had returned from the hunt and were watching over me, and I felt relieved. God had taken care of me. Days went by, and I regained slowly my strength; my men went out hunting and brought me game, the women of the country went out fishing and brought me fish, the people brought me food. None of them wanted their Ntangani to die. They were all kind to me in that far country where they might have killed and plundered me.

I shall always remember Quengueza. I do love old Quengueza; nor shall I ever forget old Anguilai, the Bakalai chief who, when I was so ill, gave the only goat he had for me to eat, to make me strong, he said. It was the goat that he had laid by for a wife.

Good Obindji was not behindhand in kindness, and I shall never forget friends Querlaouen and Malaouen, and I often hope that we may meet again. I wish they could know that I often think of them, and that I have a heart full of gratitude for all their kindness to me.

I began now to get stronger and stronger, and was soon able to go about with my gun. How glad I was to be again able to shoot gorillas, and make collections of curious animals and birds to bring with me to New York and show them to my friends and tell them how hard I had worked to collect them!

I shall never forget that, one day as I lay ill under that big tree, I spied an enormous snake folded among the branches of another tree not far off from me. My attention had been drawn to that tree by the cries of a squirrel. I wished some of my men had been with me to kill it, so that I might have something nice to eat, though I was not very hungry; but there was no man with me, only three women who were taking care of me. I was not strong enough to take my gun. I was so weak that I did not mind having the snake so close to me.

I will tell you what that squirrel and that snake were doing.

The snake was charming the poor little squirrel. How nice the squirrel was! how beautiful his little tail! how black and bright seemed his little eyes! His little feet were moving onward toward the snake; his little tail was

up, and he chippered as he advanced toward certain death.

The snake was still as death, not one of his folds could have been seen moving. How black and shiny the ugly creature was, and what a contrast with the green leaves of the trees! Part of his body was coiled on a limb of

CHARMING THE SQUIRREL.

the tree. How fixedly he looked at the squirrel! His head was triangular, and he belonged to that family of snakes that spend the greatest portion of their time on trees. This was of a very venomous kind. I wished I had been strong enough to take my gun and kill the serpent, and so save the life of the little squirrel.

Nearer and nearer the squirrel came; louder and louder were his chipperings; he tried to run away, but could not. At last he came within a foot of the snake. There was a pause; then suddenly, like a flash of lightning, the snake sprung: the poor little squirrel was in the folds of the ugly reptile, and soon I saw his body gradually disappearing into its inflated mouth, and the broken silence of the forest resumed its sway.

## CHAPTER XXI.

WITCHCRAFT. — ACCUSATION OF PENDÉ. — RESULT OF HIS TRIAL.

WAR is looming on the banks of the Ovenga. Witchcraft is at the bottom of the trouble. The Bakalais have met from every vale and from every hill, and chiefs and elders and warriors have come to ask for the head of Pendé. I am alone of all my race in this turmoil.

Pendé was a younger brother of King Obindji, and was himself the chief of a village. Pendé was disliked by every body. The fearful accusation which the Bakalais brought against him was this. Pendé was said to have stolen the bones of dead persons in the forest and to have made a fetich with them, which fetich was to keep trade away from a particular village. Pendé was an *aniemba* (a wizard); for who ever heard of men who went and stole human bones and kept them, that were not sorcerers? Pendé's ways were strange and mysterious. People could not understand them, and he must be killed. Obindji being the eldest brother, they called on him to issue an order for the killing of Pendé.

Obindji must give up his brother. Quengueza being in the country, the discussion took place before him. I and Quengueza stood on two stools in the midst of the two opposite camps. One camp demanded Pendé's life,

while the people of the other said Pendé was not guilty of what he had been accused. Hence these latter were unwilling to deliver him to be killed.

With the exception of Quengueza, every man there was armed to the teeth. They were all covered with fetiches and war-charms; they were painted in all sorts of fantastic colors. How ugly many of them looked! how devilish, how blood-thirsty many of them seemed to be! O God, how kind thou art! Thou makest the rain fall on the evil, and on the good; thou makest the dew of heaven fall on the poisonous plant, and on the plant that feedeth man. Still, in despite of the blood-thirstiness of these people; in despite of their superstitions and horrid customs, now and then the better nature of man would get possession of them, and their hearts were susceptible of better feelings.

So a man of the name of Mashamamai came forward, he was thin and wiry, tall and slender; his features were sharp, his eyes sunken, his cheeks somewhat prominent, and his filed teeth showed themselves every time he opened his mouth to speak. His body was tattooed all over; he wore round the waist a leopard's belt, which he himself had entrapped and killed, a necklace of leopard's and gorilla's teeth; on his side hung a huge war-knife. His eyebrows were painted yellow; on his forehead there was a broad white mark, while one of his cheeks was painted red, and the other yellow. He certainly had succeeded in his attempt to look horrid.

He began in a hollow, sonorous voice, and said—

"Bakali, people among us have been dying. Where is Aqualai? he is gone. Where is Anguilai? he is gone. Where are Djali and Ratenou, our great hunters? they

THE TRIAL OF PENDE

are gone. Where is Olenda? Where are the people of our once large clan? They have all gone, to come no more to us. How is this? For they were well before death got hold of them, and they could not have died unless people had bewitched them. Where are our women who once danced and sang for us, who went on our plantations, who gave us food, who went fishing and gave us fish, and who bore children to us? They, too, have gone. The forest is full of dead men's bones. How could this be, unless we have sorcerers among us?"

The whole crowd of the two camps shouted with one accord, "How could men die unless they are bewitched?" The dread of death was on the face of all; their eyes became wild, and they sought revenge, for none of them wanted to die. "There would be no death without *aniemba*," they all shouted; "without *aniemba* there would be no sickness." A little more, and the frenzied crowd of the two camps would have rushed forward and cut poor Pendé to pieces. The speaker who was speaking was considered one of their most powerful orators. He went on to say that he had had a dream—many others had the same dream—it was that Pendé had gone into the woods and stolen men's bones. Yes, he was sure of it, for his dreams could not lie. They all shouted on the accuser's side, "Our dreams can not lie! They must be true. It must be so. Pendé has gone into the forest, and stolen men's bones to make a *monda* fetich to kill us, and to prevent trade from coming to us." Then a dead silence followed. Pendé came forward, and in a loud voice said, "No, I have never done such a thing—I am not a wizard. I will drink the *mboundou* if I am accused of being one." He was sure he was not one—he would not die, and he

would make them give him plenty of slaves for having insulted him. He had never taken in his hands any human bones. There were wizards, but he was not one of them. He wanted them to live long—he wanted them to kill plenty of elephants, to marry plenty of wives, to have plenty of children, and a great number of slaves; he was not jealous of them. Their dreams were false. He could never wish such evil things upon them. On the contrary, somebody was jealous of him, and wanted the people to kill him, so that they might divide his wives and slaves, and take his spear and his gun.

Pendé's speech produced a good effect, especially as he was backed by a strong force. All the time he addressed himself to King Quengueza, who was seated, sedate and stately, and at whose side stood his (organa) idol. I was listening in wonder, astonished at this strange spectacle. Quengueza got up, and in a short time the palaver was over, and, in order to have peace, Pendé had to give away three slaves to the three chief accusers. But Pendé was suspected of being a wizard, and when once the suspicion of being such an awful *evil being* takes possession of the people, it never wears out of their minds. So, a short time after, poor Pendé was again accused of witchcraft—of having bewitched a man who had died. Obindji himself got afraid of his brother, and Pendé was killed, and his body was thrown in the river, after having been cut into more than a hundred pieces.

## CHAPTER XXII.

GORILLA HUNTING.—PREPARATIONS.—WE KILL A MALE GORILLA.—BRINGING HIM TO CAMP.

We are merry. Our camp has been built; we are in a country where elephants, gorillas, leopards, and wild boars are abundant. There are also antelopes and gazelles, and other wild animals.

We are seated round the fire and talking of to-morrow, for we are going hunting.

We are far away from any village of the Ashankolo Mountains, and are near the Ovenga River. Our little canoe that took us there we have hidden in the forest. We are not very far from the land called *Kanga Niaré*.

There was Malaouen, the Bakalai hunter; there was Querlaouen, another savage who knew not what fear was. There was Gambo, the son of an Ashira chief, who was not behind any one in courage. Elephants, gorillas, and leopards had been killed by him, and he was the nimblest fellow I ever saw. To each I had given a present of a nice gun, to each I had given also a keg of powder and several flints. We were all very good friends, every body said so in the country. They were, they said, the good friends of the spirit.

Before we had started their wives had loaded our canoe with provisions. They had put sugar-cane in it for me, saying I must eat it on my return from the chase

when I should feel tired. We had two little Bakalai boys to take care of our camp, to fetch fire-wood, and to cook our food. The only fear we had was that the Bakalai of the interior might come upon us on the sly and shoot some of us, but then we were far away from them. We all swore that if any one of us was killed we would avenge him.

The night came, the fires were kept bright, our meal of plantain was cooked, and I roasted on charcoal a piece of wild boar which friend Querlaouen had given me. Our guns were as clean and bright as buttons, the powder was safe, the bullets were right, and we were to have a jolly time. I went to sleep, and dreamed of whole herds of elephants being slaughtered, of gigantic gorillas being killed, of new animals being discovered.

Before daylight we were awake; my men cut their hands and made them bleed, in order, they said, to steady them. They also covered themselves with fetiches, to be protected from the evil spirits and to have luck in the chase.

I blackened my face and hands with charcoal mixed with oil, so that I might look like them. We looked at our guns, unloaded them, and then reloaded, and saw every thing was right. It was daylight when we started, and for the first day it was agreed that we should go gorilla hunting.

We had come to a country where we knew that gorillas were sure to be found, for there grew a pulpy pear-shaped fruit the tonda, of which the animal is very fond. It grows almost upon a level with the ground, and is of a splendid red color. Not only were gorillas fond of the tonda, but I myself liked it very much, as did also the ne-

groes. I am very fond of the subdued and grateful acid of this fruit. The kind that grows on the sandy prairies of the sea-shore is not fit to eat. Many and many times I would have starved in the forest without the tonda.

We were not mistaken, for we found everywhere gorilla marks, and now and then we could see the huge foot-prints of some old monster, which probably would have come and offered us battle if he had been near at hand; at other places we saw where they had seated themselves and been eating the tonda. At another place near a little stream we discovered that a female gorilla and her baby had been drinking, for I could see the tiny feet of the little one.

"There must be gorillas not far off," whispered Malaouen into my ears, and at the same time he looked carefully at his gun. Querlaouen and Gambo gave a chuckle, and looked at Malaouen and at me. We all listened in silence; we were then in one of the thickest and densest parts of the forest; all was apparently still, but the quick ear of Malaouen had detected something, had heard a noise, and he wanted to know the cause of it.

We were so excited that our breathing was loud and distinctly audible. We were all close together and did not move. We at once cocked our guns, for we heard the moving of branches just ahead of us, when lo! the forest resounded with the terrific roar of the gorilla which made the very earth fairly shake under our feet. As soon as the gorilla saw us he stood up, and beat his chest with his powerful hands until it resounded like an immense bass drum. His intensely black face was something horrid to behold; his sunken deep gray eyes looked like the eyes of a demon, and he opened his mouth

and gave vent to roar after roar, showing his powerful canine teeth. How big they were! they were frightful to look upon; the inside of his mouth was so red.

It was a male gorilla, a real fighting fellow, and was not afraid of us. How horrid he looked as the hair on the top of his head twitched up and down, and as he made the woods ring with his awful roar until the forest was full of the din!

We stood in silence, gun in hand, and I was ready to fire, when Malaouen, who is a cool fellow, said, "Not yet." The monster, according to them, was not near enough. He stopped for a minute or so, and then seated himself, for his legs did not seem well adapted to support his huge body. The gorilla looked at us with his evil gray eyes, then beat his breast with his long, powerful, and gigantic arms, giving another howl of defiance. How awful was that howl! He then advanced upon us. Now he stopped, and, though not far off, they all said, "Not yet." I must own to having been somewhat accustomed to see gorillas. I was terribly excited, for I always felt that, if the animal was not killed, some one of us would be killed.

I now judged he was not more than ten or twelve yards from us, and I could see plainly the ferocious and fiendish face of the monstrous ape. It was working with rage; his huge teeth were ground against each other, so that we could hear the sound; the skin of the forehead was moved rapidly back and forth, bringing a truly devilish expression upon the hideous face; then once more he opened his mouth and gave a roar which seemed to shake the woods like thunder, and, looking us in the eyes and beating his breast, advanced again. This time

he was within eight yards from us before he stopped again. My breath was growing short with excitement as I watched the huge beast. Malaouen said "Steady," as he came up. When he stopped, Malaouen said "Now;" and before he could utter the roar for which he was opening his mouth, three musket balls were in his body, and he fell dead almost without a struggle. Gambo had

DEATH OF A MALE GORILLA.

not fired; he had kept his gun in reserve in case of accident. "Do not fire too soon. If you do not kill him he will kill you," said friend Malaouen to me—a piece of advice which I found afterward to be literally true. It was a huge beast, and a very old one indeed. Gorillas vary in height like men. This one was over 5 feet 6

inches. Its arms spread out 7 feet and 2 inches. Its bare, huge, brawny chest measured 50 inches round; and the big toe or thumb of its foot measured nearly 6 inches in circumference. Its arm seemed only like an immense bunch of muscle, and its legs and claw-like feet were so well fitted for grabbing and holding on that I did not wonder that the negroes believed that this animal concealed itself in trees, and pulled up with his foot any living thing, leopard, ox, or man, that passed beneath. There is no doubt that the gorilla could do this, but that he does, I do not believe. They are ferocious and mischievous, but not carnivorous.

Though you see by the description I have given you that the animal is large, I have killed others much larger, about one of which I will speak to you.

The face of this gorilla was entirely black. The vast chest, which proved his great power, was bare, and covered with a parchment-like skin. Its body was covered with gray hair, the hair being longer on the arms.

Though there is much dissimilarity between this animal and man, I never kill one without having a sickening realization of the horrid human likeness of the beast. This was particularly the case to-day when the animal approached us in its fierce way, and walking on its hind-legs and looking us boldly in the face, seemed to me like an incarnate fiend.

I stuffed and preserved its skin and skeleton, and a few years ago many of you saw them in New York or Boston.

I was delighted that we had killed a gorilla. We had the greatest trouble in bringing the beast to the camp. We had to disembowel him on account of his weight, in

order to carry him. We cut a long pole, and then tied its body on it. Then at one end there was Querlaouen, and at the other Gambo and Malaouen, while I took the lead, and so we returned by the way we had come. That gorilla must have weighed between three and four hundred pounds.

You might ask how we could find our way back in this immense forest, where the trees are so thick and close together. I will tell you.

As we advanced, we bent down or broke the boughs of trees which we passed. If afraid of making a noise, we quietly took the leaves, and as we went on we spread them on the ground, but above all we noticed every thing, especially the trees, and it is wonderful how quick one acquires this habit of observation. Yet, despite all this, now and then people get lost, but it is generally because they have not been careful enough, and have not followed the rules of which I have told you.

On the hunting grounds the Bakalai seemed to know every inch of ground, every tree and shrub.

At last we reached the camp. How glad we were! It was almost dark, and we were very tired; the two boys welcomed us and cooked our evening meal. Tremendous fires were lighted, and my three fellows laid flat on the ground, the soles of their feet almost touching the fire. It is wonderful how by doing this they rest them, and cure the soreness which a long march occasions.

I do not know how, but we all fell asleep without knowing it, leaving the boys to keep watch; and when I awoke during the night Gambo was snoring in a most fearful manner, Malaouen had almost his back in the fire and did not feel it, while the position of Querlaouen was

something laughable, his arms being extended their full length; for he lay on his back, while his big fetich was resting on the middle of his chest; his gun lay by his side, and one of his knees was up, while the other limb was stretched out to its full length. All three carried on a little snoring musical concert, but that evening Gambo certainly carried off the palm for noise. I did not want to awake the good fellows, for they had worked hard, and we intended to have another tremendous hunt, for we designed to kill a leopard if possible. I told the boys to go to sleep, and I myself kept watch. It was soon four o'clock in the morning, and the singing of the gray partridge, a new species which I discovered, soon warned me that another day was about to begin.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

IN THE BUFFALO COUNTRY.—THE PARADISE OF FLIES.—THE VARIOUS SPECIES.

Now, though we have not left our hunting grounds of the preceding chapter, we have moved toward the Ovenga River, and have built our camp not far from its shore. We are now really in the heart of Kanga-Niaré, the name which Quengueza people give to the land. Niaré means buffalo, but I have forgotten the meaning of Kanga.

We have changed our camp, for Malaouen was fearful that some of our guns might have been heard by the warlike Bakalais of the Ashankolo; and as their clans had had some trouble with them, he was afraid that they might come in ambush and shoot some of us. This, of course, was not a very pleasant prospect. These Bakalai are so treacherous that they are capable of any thing; they kill without warning any one that comes in their way, whatever they may be, even women, children or old men.

As we worked hard all day we could not keep watch all night, so we had concluded to move.

Our little camp is pleasantly situated on the edge of the forest in front of a beautiful little prairie. There are several of these, and rambling about I saw that traces of wild buffaloes were abundant. I had not tasted buf-

falo for a long time, and I thought it would be a nice thing if I could kill one.

Querlaouen, Gambo, and Malaouen had been feasting on gorilla meat, though I had not. Not only had they feasted on it, but they had smoked a good deal of it to take back with them.

The first day we kept quiet. The soil was sandy, the grass was very luxuriant, growing at least two feet high. The sun is very oppressive in these clear spots or little prairies. We were tormented terribly by flies; the country of the Ovenga seems to be the paradise of flies. During the day they often wear a man's life out. They sting you, they suck your blood, and they plague you beyond expression.

As for musquitoes, they were swarming at this time of the year, and I would defy any one to sleep at night without musquito-nets, unless his skin were bullet proof, or as hard as the skin of an elephant or hippopotamus; and as mine was not, I always carried with me a net made of the grass cloth of the interior.

Three of these day-flies might have almost been called the three plagues; in fact, in these parts there was always some kind of insect to annoy one.

Early in the morning, just at sunrise, the *igooguai* makes its appearance and only disappears when the sun becomes too warm, as it does toward nine or ten o'clock. The igooguai is a small, almost imperceptible gnat, which appears in incredible numbers in the morning in certain regions. From ten o'clock it is seen no more till four, when its operations are recommenced, and last till sunset.

It is a very, very small fly, which can hardly be noticed; it might be called a sand-fly, and a dreadful

little creature it is. In some regions it is found in such great numbers that it is almost impossible to secure quiet in the morning, hence the people have to surround themselves with smoke to drive them away; and one must remain in his hut, which must be filled entirely with smoke, in order to be free from them. If I stood still outside for a while, my face and hands were covered with them. After they have fed themselves their bodies become almost of a blood color. You have hardly killed one hundred on your hand or face, when a few minutes after the same number is found. Of course you can not kill them one by one, so the only way is to pass your hand right over them all on your face. My unprotected skin was covered then with little red spots as if I had the measles.

I really can not tell you how these *igooguai* troubled me; sometimes they almost made me crazy. They are most determined blood-suckers, leaving a bite which itches terribly and for a considerable time. They are only found in open places generally.

The heat of the sun had hardly driven the *igooguai* out of the field and obliged them to take shelter in the forest or somewhere else (for during the heat of the day they do not trouble any one), than the flies—which we might call the three plagues—the *iboco*, the *nchouna*, and the *ibolai*, began to make their appearance. These are quiet in the morning, and remain so until the sun has warmed the atmosphere, then they begin to buzz around the people; hence, as you see, there was no peace for poor me. I had hardly got rid of one kind of the igooguai when I got into the hands of these three other suckers by way of a change.

In certain regions, from eleven o'clock till three, I certainly thought I should lose my senses, especially when living on the banks of rivers. The most dreaded of all, and the most savage of these three species of flies, is the *iboco*. I shall never forget the iboco as long as I live. I have been stung too many times by them to forget it. A hot day, and under a powerful sun, these insects attacked us with a terrible persistency that left us no peace.

The iboco is a large fly of the size of a hornet, with yellow body and a large green head; it flies with a wonderful rapidity; and when it wants to rest on somebody it whirls round and round so rapidly that the eyes become quite bewildered, and in the wink of an eye they rest on the bare back of some poor negro, and give a sting which draws often from him a cry of anguish. There is always great rejoicing when an iboco is killed. They are very plentiful in the regions of the Ovenga River; indeed, I have never seen them in such great numbers anywhere else. They like to be by the water and in open places. I have never seen them except in the clearings.

Many and many times have I started as if stung by a scorpion or centipede, when it was nothing but an iboco, whose bill had gone through two or three of my garments. Their bite is quite as painful as that of a scorpion, but happily it is not venomous, and the pain does not last long; but its sharpness makes up for the shortness of its duration. Often the blood has run down my face or arm, from their savage attacks, and even the well-tanned skin of the negroes is punctured till it bleeds, so that one would almost think that a leech had been at work on them.

The *nchouna* has quite another sort of tactics. It is

not so large as the iboco, is far more sly, and is also found in greater numbers. If the iboco were as numerous as the nchouna, the people would surely not be able to live in the regions of the Ovenga. The nchouna is somewhat of the shape of our common flies, but of at least twice the size; it is of a yellowish color, and perhaps more elongated, resembling very much the *tsetche* of Southern Africa, of which species it may be a variety.

As one is seated, he sees several nchounas flying in a quiet way round about him. They are very sly, and the least movement one makes sends them off. As they fly around one they do not appear as if intent upon an attack, but before you know it the fly has come, and in such a gentle way that you do not notice it at all, for they insert their bill very gently into your body. They will stay until they have sucked your blood and filled themselves with it, and generally I never knew of their attack till I felt the itch which follows the bite when the fly has gone. Then this is followed by a little painful swelling. The itching begins, and lasts often for several hours, especially if the fly has been disturbed before its full allowance has been taken. In the height of the rainy season in the country of the Ovenga no day passed without my being bitten several times by the nchouna.

The negroes usually have a little broom, made of the stem of the leaves of certain trees, to keep off this insect; often the tail of an elephant is used for the same purpose.

The third species, I remember well, is called *ibolai*. It is an insect twice as large as our common house-fly. The wings cross each other. This fly is black, more elongated than the nchouna, and quicker on the wing; its sting is long, and strong enough to pierce the thickest clothes one

can wear in the heat of an African summer. The sting is so terribly sharp that I have often jumped up with the sudden pain, which was as if a pin had been stuck savagely into my person; but the bite of this insect, if painful, does not last like that of the nchouna. You need not think for a moment that the day is over with the flies, and that one is going to rest. Toward four o'clock, when the sun begins to go down and lays hidden back of the hills, the iboco, nchouna, and ibolai disappear. The *igooguai*, as I have said before, makes again its appearance to plague and annoy; toward sunset they retire for parts unknown to me, and several varieties of musquitoes make their appearance to remind man that he is made of flesh and blood. In some parts of the country they are very plentiful, and absolutely terrible, but I am happy to say that on the banks of the Ovenga, where the flies I have described to you are very abundant, the musquitoes are not so very numerous. The rainy season is the time when all those flies are most abundant; the dry season is almost free from them, and in many places they then become almost unknown.

Such is, I assure you, a faithful picture of the flies of that region. The best way to get rid of them is to keep in motion. If you stand still they are sure to come upon you.

You will ask yourselves, How can people live in such a country? It is wonderful how one gets accustomed to snakes, ants, flies, musquitoes, scorpions, and centipedes To be sure, they are not pleasant companions.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

ELEPHANT PITS.—A CAPTIVE.—DIVIDING THE MEAT.—THE ALETHE CASTANEA.

QUERLAOUEN, Malaouen, and their wives and children, and all their families, which amounted to about forty people, had worked hard at digging elephant pits, of the same shape as those I have described to you in "Stories of the Gorilla Country," and which I saw in the cannibal country. The pits had been covered with branches of trees, while others were not for elephants to fall into. Often when they roam at night, before they know it, down they are. A great work it must have been to dig them; they were about fifteen feet deep, perfectly perpendicular, and about eight or ten feet in length and six feet broad.

*Hanous* had also been fixed, such as I have described to you while among the cannibals, in a preceding volume. These were about ten or fifteen feet long; and at a distance of about a foot apart there were huge sharp-pointed iron spikes about six or eight inches in length. Each of these hanous must have weighed several hundred pounds; and as they fell from a great height, the weight falling on an elephant's spine must be very great, and more than sufficient to break it.

So, passing through these tangled forests, we had to be very careful, in order not to fall into pits or to have a

hanous fall upon our heads; for in that case you would never have heard from me again. Malaouen knew exactly where these pits were.

We were going through the forest with the greatest care, thinking that we might meet gorillas, among which might be one of those lone fierce males.

Suddenly we heard a noise in the distance. We listened. What could it be? Malaouen's quick ear soon detected that an elephant had been caught either by a hanou, or that he had fallen into the pit. We listened, to make sure of the direction the noise came from. We looked most carefully at our guns, to make sure that we could fully depend upon them, and then set out for the place where we suspected the huge beast was lying prostrate.

As we approached the spot, the moans of the elephant became louder and louder, and we at last fell into its track, which we followed, our direction being thus clearly indicated. At length we came to the pit. How careful we were in approaching it, and what a sight met our eyes! I came trembling on its brink, for fear that the earth would give way and precipitate me into the pit where the poor elephant was. What a sight met my eyes as I looked down! The bottom of the pit was filled with a black mass, which I recognized to be an elephant; the earth around was saturated with its blood. The poor creature was not dead. In its fall its ponderous weight had broken its four legs, and one of its magnificent tusks had been dashed to pieces; its head was all bleeding, and its trunk now and then moved up and down. The agonies of the poor creature were great. I was glad that we had come to end the sufferings of the poor beast.

So we raised our guns and fired right into its ear. Malaouen's gun gave a fearful recoil that almost knocked him down. I thought it had burst. All became silent. The elephant's ears and trunk dropped down, there was no more moaning; death had done its work.

Like almost all the people of his tribe, he carried an axe with him; a creeper was cut down, and tied to a tree near by to serve as a ladder, and Malaouen dropped down into the pit. He had thrown his axe first and then descended; and as he stood on the elephant, how small he looked by the size of the huge beast! Then he cut the end of his tail, which is made of very coarse and very dark bristly hair ending in a tuft, and came up again. Joy filled his heart as we set out for the camp, and next for the village.

As soon as the news spread, we were received with wild demonstrations of joy. They were going to have a nice time. They were going to have plenty of elephant meat to eat. The children were also glad. I can assure you that a big elephant forms a large mass of flesh, and would help to pretty well fill a butcher shop. Then the news came that in a neighboring village, not far from ours, three elephants had been killed. I was quite astonished, for the animals are not plentiful in the region I was in; but I was obliged to believe the report when I saw the three new freshly-cut tails of the elephants. One was given to me afterward, and a splendid thing it was to kill the nchouna, the ibolai, and the iboco flies.

I just came into the town when the ceremonial dance was about to be performed which precedes the division of the elephant meat. This is a thank-offering to two spirits, *Mondo* and *Olombo*, who seem to have a presiding influence over the hunt.

A doctor from a country called Ashira, of which I will speak to you hereafter, was leading the ceremonies. I find it here as we find it often at home, that the prophet gains in repute the further he travels from home. In Goumbi, Quengueza's village, a Bakalai doctor was held in high repute. In Biagano, a Goumbi doctor was chief of all the prophets. Here among the Bakalai, only an Ashira doctor was thought worthy of performing the ceremonies.

The Ashira doctor of course was covered with all sorts of fetiches. He had painted his body in order to impress his audience with his great power, and every thing he did was done in a mysterious manner.

They had three pieces, cut from the hind-quarters of the elephants, boiling in large pots. Around these they danced, while the Ashira doctor chanted praises and petitions to Mondo and Olombo.

DANCING AROUND THE ELEPHANT MEAT.

A piece was cut off and sent into the woods to appease the hunger of these deities (or, more likely, of their

representatives, the leopards, or the bashikouay or hyenas), and then the rest was eaten by the people, all in the presence of the doctor.

Next came the division of the great heaps of uncooked meat. The town, the town's friends, the hunters, the hunters' friends and *their* friends, all came and got shares. I received about fifty pounds for myself, then besides I had a piece of the trunk, and four of the feet were given to me. These, by the way, must have weighed more than fifty pounds by themselves.

As soon as I went back to my place I got an *orala* and smoked my meat, which I intended to keep, as we say, for a rainy day, that is, for a day when I would have nothing to eat.

I do not know why, but for a few days after the killing of the elephants the country was full of bashikouays. I could scarcely move anywhere without falling in with these fellows, and their bites were, as usual, very severe. They had no doubt smelled the elephant flesh and claimed their shares. I noticed that there was a curious little bird with these bashikouays, the *Alethe castanea*. This is a beautiful bird, which follows or precedes these bashikouays, and feeds on the insects that fly away from the ants; it is a new species. They fly in small flocks, and follow industriously the bashikouay ants in their marches about the country. The birds eat insects; and when the bashikouay army routs before it the frightened grasshoppers and beetles, this bird, like a regular camp-follower, pounces on the prey and carries it off.

The natives have some superstitions about this bird, and it is said by them to have a devil in it. For what reason they say so I could not find out.

My old enemies the snakes were also quite abundant, and as we pushed through the woods we often saw several great anacondas hanging from a projecting bough, waiting their prey. I shot a little bird, a very curious one, which, in its fall, lodged among some vines. I was anxious to get it, and began to climb up after it. Just as I was reaching out for my bird, a snake, belonging to one of the most venomous kinds found in these woods, stuck out his head at me from the thick vine foliage. I was very much startled, and dropped down to the ground without any loss of time. I could almost feel the reptile's breath against my face. It was a great scare. People do not get over snake bites very easily, and I am sure you are not astonished that I was frightened.

## CHAPTER XXV.

A DESERTED VILLAGE.—FEAR OF DEATH.—WARS BETWEEN VILLAGES.—AFRICAN WILD BOAR.—THE HUNT.

I HAVE just arrived in a deserted village; there was not a soul to be seen. There was nothing, absolutely nothing, to remind us of living man except the abandoned huts. How sad every thing looked all around! The plantain-trees were growing back of the huts, and young bunches of plantains were gracefully hanging down from them.

Even the little Sycobii birds had left, and only their deserted nests on the trees testified that once they had built their homes there.

What had become of the people? They had left: they had abandoned their village. How often I have met these abandoned villages in the forests of Africa, but especially in the regions inhabited by the Bakalais, the Mbondemos, the Mbishos, the Shekianis.

This village was situated on the broad waters of the River Ovenga, about 90 miles south of the equator. As I was not afraid of evil spirits, I concluded I should use the huts to sleep in at night; but there was tremendous opposition at first, for the men who were with me said it was a bewitched village; two people had died there within a few days of each other; the place was not good

to live in; some of us would die if we remained. Poor creatures, though daring and brave in the hunt, how afraid they are of death! Hence if a man dies in a village there is a great commotion, if another dies the village must be abandoned.

A village is scarce built, often the plantations have not borne fruit for the first time, when they feel impelled to move. Then every thing is abandoned; they gather up what few stores of provisions they may have, and start off, often for great distances, to make, with tedious labor, a new settlement, which will be abandoned in turn after a few months. Sometimes, however, they remain for two or even three months more in the same place.

Many things contribute to their roving habits, but first of all I have said is their great fear of death. They dread to see a dead person. Their sick, unless they have good and near friends, are often driven out of the village to die in loneliness in the forest. Those Bakalai have no burying-ground. After a man is dead the body is thrown anywhere in the forest, and no more attention is paid to it.

The people of these tribes are very superstitious, and often after the death of a man several friendless creatures are accused and condemned in a breath, and murdered in cold blood. Afterward the village is broken up, the people set up again after their wanderings, and fix upon some lonely spot for a new plantation and a new home.

What a life this must be, to be all the while vainly fleeing from the dread face of death, as if such a thing were possible. What can stand still in the world?

Nothing; absolutely nothing; constant changes are taking place.

These people are of a treacherous disposition, and are constantly quarrelling among their neighbors. They are most barbarous in their mode of warfare, in which women, children, and even babies are killed. Once while staying in a Bakalai village there were two women, who were quietly washing, and were killed and left there, until the people, wondering at their disappearance, looked for them, and found them dead.

When war has once really broken out in the country there is no rest or safety. No man or woman in any village can take a step in any direction, day or night, without fear of death. They lie in ambush to surprise each other's villages. If they have guns, they come on the sly and shoot through the bark of which their houses are made, and kill sleeping persons; hence no one could sleep for two consecutive nights at the same place. In passing a tree, sometimes the enemy steals in behind, and will spear the poor luckless man, woman, or child. They use every unfair means of warfare; and the meaner the attack, and the greater the treachery, the more glory they have won. In such times of war the fires are put out after dark, because they give light to the enemy, and the glare of the fire makes blind those near it, while those who come through the darkness can see well. The people keep a dead silence, lest their voices should betray their whereabouts; the hunters are loth to hunt, for fear of falling into an ambush of some hidden enemies; the women and slaves fear to plant, and therefore every body approaches a condition of semi-starvation. This sometimes lasts for months. At last whole districts are de-

populated; those who are not killed desert their villages to seek safety in some remote and unknown spot of the forest where they think they may be safer; hence very often I felt quite astonished to meet little villages far off. Many of their villages are palisaded, and their dogs keep watch.

Yes, among such people I have lived for a long time when there was war in the country, and I never knew if by mistake they might not kill me.

Now I have given you a slight idea of these warlike and treacherous Bakalai. I am happy to say that on the right bank of the Ovenga Quengueza has succeeded in preventing these wild men from making war upon each other's villages.

We have come to shoot wild boar. It is the season when they are very fat, for we are in the month of March, and I tell you these wild boars of Equatorial Africa are glorious eating, and are magnificent beasts to bag.

Do not think they look like the wild boars they have in Europe. Nothing of the kind. It is no easy matter to come near enough to have a shot at these wild beasts, for they are exceedingly shy.

Night came, and my fellows were so afraid of evil spirits that they kept tremendous fires and kept talking all night, and when daylight came they felt so tired that they all went to sleep. This will never do, I said to myself, for if a man does not sleep at night he certainly can not work hard in the day.

After they awoke they came in a body, friend Malaouen leading, saying that we had better go and make our camp far away in the forest, for the place where we were was not good at all. I thought some of them might get

ill through fear, so I concluded I had better move, for the people would lay the blame upon me. People have to be very prudent in such a wild country.

So we moved our traps a few miles off and built our camp; this was hardly done when a storm burst upon us, and the rain poured down by bucketsful, and the thunder and the lightning was something terrific. It was a good thing that our shades were right, for we should have been wet to the skin.

Early the next morning I shouldered my rifle and set off for the wildest part of the wood with friends Malaouen and Querlaouen, who now felt quite happy since we had left the abandoned village. The woods were pretty hard to go through, for the hunting-paths had not been used often, for fear of the Bakalai living in the Ashankolo.

In this gigantic forest there is a most extraordinary kind of wild boar, its body being of a bright red-yellow color, somewhat like that of an orange. How strange they look as they wander through the forest, sometimes a few together, at other times twenty or thirty, or even larger numbers!

That morning we got into new and fresh tracks of the wild boars; the earth was all uprooted by their snouts. I am sure they had not come to the place a half-hour before we did, and what a havoc they had made! We followed the tracks in hot haste; soon we could hear their grunts, and we thought they must be numerous by the noise they made.

How to approach them was the difficult question; for if there is any wild game, this is certainly one of the wildest sort I know. If there had been two or three of them together we might not have had so much difficulty

in approaching them; but how were we to approach so many without being detected?

So we concluded to go by a roundabout way and try to get ahead of them, and then lay in ambush, waiting for them to pass.

The wild boars were in a valley, where the ground was somewhat soft, and they would, I thought, continue to follow it. In the midst of this valley there was a beautiful little rivulet of clear water meandering crookedly on in the same uneven manner as the narrow valley itself, which was flanked on each side by tremendous high hills, covered like the valley and all the country round with gigantic trees, which bore different kinds of fruits and nuts.

Then we concluded to ascend a hill close by and descend in as swift a manner as we could into the valley on the other side, which was the same one in which we were standing: by doing so, we could make a short cut and get ahead of the wild boars, and then choose our ground and wait for them.

The plan succeeded perfectly. After crossing, we found a huge dead tree fallen on the ground, and behind it we hid ourselves.

Soon we heard the grunts of the wild boars coming; we were delighted; we looked at our guns, then fixed the barrels on the trunk of the tree, raised our heads hardly above it, and only so high that our eyes could get a glimpse at the wild boars.

Here they come! I can see them through the jungle, snorting unconsciously and eating what they have uprooted. How little do they think there are such formidable enemies close at hand! They came nearer and near

er. Then after looking at each other, as if to say, Is it time? we took steady aim, put our fingers on the triggers, and bang! bang! bang! our three guns went off at the same time, three wild boars biting the ground, and the others giving tremendous leaps. Four of them, crazy with fright, came rushing along, leaping over the trunk of the trees behind which we were hidden, and right above our heads. My goodness! if they had come down upon us they would have completely smashed us. I turned round, fired my second shot, and bagged another.

"Four wild boars are killed!" we shouted with frantic joy!

KILLING FOUR WILD BOARS.

What splendid animals two of them were! How big! the wild boars of the black forest in Germany could not have compared with them.

This wild boar is a new species, and I have called it *Potamochœrus albifrons:* that is to say, white-fronted.

What strange-looking animals! They had a long muzzle, and on each side there was a large warty protuberance half-way between the nose and the eyes. These, and a singular sort of bristle, surround the eyes. The ears, which are long and ended in tufts of coarse hair, give the animal a strange expression. The bodies of the boars were of the color I have mentioned.

On my return to the United States, in 1860, I gave a full description of this curious animal, and of many others I discovered, before the Boston Society of Natural History. I have always retained a pleasant recollection of my visit to that society, of its president, Professor Jeffries Wyman, of its secretary, my friend Dr. Kneeland, and of many other members, who were very kind to me.

But how to take away that meat? We could by no possible means carry the meat of four wild boars. So myself and Malaouen were to keep watch and sleep in the forest while Querlaouen would go and fetch the people to assist us.

This *Potamochœrus albifrons* is a great jumper. I have seen no antelope that could leap as it does; one day I saw three of them leap over the Ovenga River, the distance being thirty or forty yards. It was the dry season, and one of them fell into the water. The bank from which they sprung was much higher than the opposite one.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

IN THE WILD FOREST.—HOSTILE TRIBES.—AN INTRENCHED CAMP.—FORAYS FOR PROVISIONS.

I AM in the midst of the densest and wildest part of the forest, situated not far from the Ashankolo Mountains.

Who are these three wild-looking men that are with me?

They are Querlaouen, Malaouen, and Gambo.

What are we doing seated on the ground, each one of us seeming so thoughtful?

We are holding a grand council.

The country to which we have come is a very dangerous one, for war is raging in the Ashankolo land; and though the Ovenga River lies between us and the Ashankola people, and though we are at a good distance from them, we do not feel safe. They might come to hunt in this very region. The Bakalais of the Ovenga were at war with them, or rather the Ashankolo had declared war against the people of the Ovenga, and had killed two men a few weeks before belonging to the village of a chief called Anguilai.

We ran the chance of being killed at night when asleep if these fellows discovered where we were; and during the day they might lie in ambush for us, or they might go and fetch a great number of people to attack us.

These were some of the many thoughts that suggested themselves to us as we talked matters over together.

Besides Malaouen, Querlaouen, and Gambo, we had two boys with us; one was named Njali and the other Nola.

We agreed that the first thing we must do was to build an intrenched camp.

You will all say at once, "What a wild and reckless set of fellows you were to choose such a place for a hunting-ground!"

So we were. We seemed to delight in danger for the sake of the excitement it afforded.

So, having made up our minds what to do, we rose, and taking in one hand our gun and in the other an axe, we went bravely to work and cut long poles about fifteen feet in length, which we brought to the place we had chosen for our camp. As we cut these young trees we laid our guns close by; we did not stop cutting these poles until we had a few hundreds of them, and for three days we were at work as hard as we could.

After we had collected all the poles we commenced building. We had chosen a place where four large trees made the four corners of a square. They were about thirty feet apart from each other. We then begun to drive palisades, making them go down about six inches into the ground; these we tied close together with strong lianas we had collected, until at last the square was finished. We cut all the underbrush inside, and made a very clean place for the interior of our fort.

Then the question was how to get inside? So we made two ladders, one of creepers, flexible like ropes, for the outside; the other, for the inside, was a very strong step-ladder. For the latter we cut two poles, and tied

crossed sticks upon them for steps. This ladder, as we have said, was for the inside, so that after we should reach the top of the palisade we could pull inside our ladder made of creepers, and that would thus be quite safe, for we knew that no one could leap over the palisade.

We then, in the inside of the palisade, stuck leaves upon the walls, so that if perchance any one came they could not get a peep at us.

In the interior of our square there was a somewhat tall, slender tree, up which we could climb and observe our enemies, and get a good shot at them in case we should be attacked; besides this, we had made a good many loop-holes about seven feet above the ground, so that no one outside could see through them, and before each we had made a high stand from which we could fire upon them at our ease.

How glad we were when it was over! We had then to build some huts inside for ourselves, to shelter us from the rain. We built roofs for these huts, which we covered with the bark of trees, and under it we built an orala, to smoke the meat we might get from the game we should kill. These oralas are made in the following manner. Four sticks about four feet in height, which are forked, are stuck in the ground, then cross sticks join these, and across them are laid quite a number of sticks. This orala was of course one of the most useful and necessary things we required.

Then we built another shelter for myself, and how careful they were about this; it was a real hut, eight feet long, six feet broad, with walls five feet high, and the ridge of the roof about eight feet in height from the ground. There I slept; the powder was carefully stored, and

much of it, together with bullets, were buried in the ground, so that if any one should come when we were absent they would not know where our ammunition was. My four men built also another hut for themselves.

These huts were in the centre of the yards. By the time we had finished our camp, our plantains and our smoked cassada were stored away carefully; fortunately the coola nut was there abundant, and we would have plenty to eat.

We had three very nice dogs with us, splendid hunters; besides, they would keep watch at night and warn us of danger.

We had also four Ashinga nets; each one of us had his own gun and a spare gun also.

Malaouen, Gambo, Querlaouen, and I were to hunt, while the boys were to attend to the fire-wood and to our cooking, and also were to collect the wild nuts or berries of the forest.

All this work was finished, and we went into the forest and collected a large quantity of fire-wood, and I can assure you that we had real hard work, and I wish you could have seen us. I stood on the top and threw in the inside of the fort the wood that was handed to me by the others.

At last a great pile of fire-wood was safely stored inside, and we could withstand a siege. A little brook rose from under a rock inside of our palisade not far from one of the big trees, so that we had plenty of water to drink; it was a beautiful little spring.

We felt very cosy and safe. We had only two cooking-pots with us. I had a good deal of tobacco, for I knew Querlaouen, Malaouen, and Gambo to be tremen-

dous smokers, and they seemed to enjoy their pipes so much in the evening when the day's work was over.

The medicines I had taken with me were quinine, laudanum, rhubarb, and a few other articles. I had also a bottle of brandy, which I intended to preserve most carefully for a case of need.

So, after every thing was built, one fine morning we ascended the inside steps, hung down our outside ladder, and came out. We had with us the Ashinga nets, with which we were going to hunt. We spread them in the forest in the same manner as I have described to you in "Stories of the Gorilla Country;" but instead of being many we were only four people, and we had only four Ashingas, yet we were very successful; we trapped two charming gazelles, called ncheri; and a nchombi, another beautiful little gazelle of reddish color, and captured also a kind of wild-cat, which got entangled, and which we had to kill on the spot with the butt-end of our guns.

I ordered the men not to kill the nchombi and one of the ncheri, which we seized and tied with native creepers and carried to our camp, since I wished to keep them alive if possible.

It was a pretty good day's hunt, considering that we had not fired a gun, and that we had not been more than three miles from our camp.

As we approached our fort we gave the signal agreed upon, which was three separate whistles, imitating the cry of a certain bird called *pipiyo*.

Soon the heads of the boys peeped out; they brought and fastened the rope-ladder outside, and greeted us with a smile which showed their nice filed teeth, and cast sly glances at the game which we had brought.

We were glad when we were inside, for our live stock had not been very easy to carry; besides, the Ashingas were heavy.

We immediately loosened the cords of the ncheri and nchombi, who for a few minutes could not walk, but soon afterward found their legs and made most tremendous leaps, cutting up wonderful capers. They were perfectly wild, but it was of no use, they could not leap over the palisades.

Part of the ncheri that had been killed was cut and cooked, and we had a most delicious meal. We went to sleep in safety, but nevertheless we kept our guns by our sides.

Early the next morning Querlaouen and I went to see if our little canoe, that had carried us up the river, and which we had hidden in a little narrow creek somewhat remote from the main river, was still there, and also to see if we would not meet with strange human foot-prints, which might indicate the near presence of an enemy and that we had been discovered. We came back perfectly satisfied that no one had discovered our whereabouts and that our canoe was quite safe. So we returned to tell the news, and in the afternoon we went and set traps for monkeys, which were evidently somewhat abundant, as we could hear their chattering all day long. Querlaouen, besides his gun, had an axe with him, and I carried my huge hunting-knife.

We came to a little spring and felled a small tree across for the monkey to use as a bridge; then not far from the end of the tree or bridge we bent a bough, at the extremity of which we made a ring. This ring, touching the bridge, was fixed in such a manner that the

monkey would have to pass through it to go to the other side, and in doing so would start a spring, when the ring would fly up before the monkey could get through it, and thus the animal would be hung by the neck and choked to death.

We made two of these traps.

Then we went and looked for wild honey, but could not at first see any bee-hive in the hollows of trees. I had just made up my mind that I should like to have some honey. Besides, I wanted to get some wax in order to make some candles.

Just as we were returning to the camp we discovered two bee-hives; we smoked the bees, and then took the honey-combs.

The next morning I went right to work to make wax with the honey-comb we had collected. After having boiled it and made the wax, there was a new difficulty—I had no wick. I had never thought of it before; of course I had not a bit of cotton with me, and I finally concluded that I would tear off the lower part of one of the two only shirts I possessed to make wick. Acting with the thought, I tore the shirt. I had a good deal of trouble to make these candles. First I dipped the whole length of the wick in the hot wax, holding each extremity by my hands; then I let the wax which had adhered to the wick get cold, and dipped again and again by the same process until I had obtained the size of a candle. I succeeded in making eight candles.

My clothes were getting very much worn; my pantaloons had been mended over and over again, and were getting so old and rotten that I did not know what to do. I wanted to save a pair for the sea-shore. So I resolved

that we should go Ashinga hunting again, and that I would make clothes from the skins of the wild animals we should capture.

We all turned out with our Ashingas, leaving, of

SMOKING OUT THE BEES.

course, Njali and Nola to take charge of the premises. We left them the three spare guns. We took the dogs with us.

We captured, in the first place, a hyena, which I dispatched as it laid entangled in the net with a bullet through the head. It uttered a fearful groan. We captured a porcupine, which we killed with a club. Then

we laid unsuccessfully the Ashingas three times, and I began to think that we would have nothing but hyena for dinner and supper, and no skins to make clothes with. We must make another trial.

We went a long distance to haul our nets again, and then captured two ncheris and two nchombis. We killed them on the spot with clubs, and then returned home.

I insisted on having these four animals skinned, for I wanted their skins to make a pair of trowsers. We had taken off the hyena skin and left its body on the spot, no one fancying the meat, especially as we had other game to eat.

Njali and Nola received us with open arms, but did not show their heads above the fence until they had heard our peculiar whistle. I was glad of our success, for I wanted some clothes very much.

I dried the skins, and then tried to tan them by beating them, and using the bark of a certain tree. Then with the fibres of the leaves of the pine-apple I made some thread; and I had with me strong needles, which I used in preparing the skins of animals. I cut these skins in such a shape that I thought I would make from them a pretty comfortable pair of pantaloons.

I wish you had seen me dressed in those pantaloons. They were very tough and hard. Then I made a kind of shirt with the skin of the hyena; that is, I joined two flat pieces together, left a hole for my head to pass through, and on each side holes for my arms. I did not want any sleeves. This hyena shirt was short, and only reached my waist. How strangely I looked, dressed in these long shaggy skins!

Afterward we went to work, and closed with sticks

and branches of trees a little shallow creek—almost a pond—which communicated with a larger one, in order to prevent the fish from going out, and thus there was a prospect of having plenty of fish to eat. Then, when this work was done, we went again in search of bee-hives, which are abundant in these forests. We discovered two, which were very high, and, of course, in the hollow of the trees. We concluded to come and smoke them out the next day.

These two hives were made by two different kinds of bees, one very small black kind, looking almost like a little fly, and the other by a bee of the size of our bees in America; the honey of the latter is excellent when the comb is white and new.

So after all we were, I thought, in a pretty good country, but unfortunately not very safe, on account of its warlike inhabitants; hence we were always on the alert for fear that they might find our whereabouts.

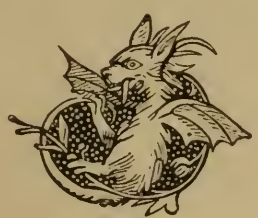
TRAPPING THE MONKEY.

The next day Querlaouen and I, when visiting monkey traps, found that a beautiful ndova had been caught. He was hanging high in the air quite dead, but the body still warm. It had just been trapped.

These ndovas are most beautiful monkeys, being among the prettiest I have ever seen. This was very large, and such a fat one! The face of Querlaouen grinned with joy at the thought of the splendid feast he was to have on our return. The fur is splendid.

These ndovas are very abundant in the forests of Africa, and the hair is of a beautiful dark color.

The great peculiarity of the animal is his perfectly white nose. How strange they look while peeping at you in the forest with that strange white spot! They are called by naturalists white-nosed monkeys.



## CHAPTER XXVII.

WE DISCOVER HUMAN FOOT-PRINTS.—WE SPY OUT THE ENEMY.—A FEMALE GORILLA.—MATERNAL FONDNESS.

ONE morning, just at daylight, Querlaouen and I, without saying a word to Gambo and Malaouen, scaled our palisade with the ladder and went to look after the traps we had made for the monkeys, in order to see if we had caught some more.

We were going silently into the forest, and as noiselessly as we could, in the hope of seeing an antelope or wild boar, or some other kind of wild animal on our way. At last we reached the banks of a little stream, situated, as I judged, about six or seven miles from our camp, when lo! Malaouen and I saw what threw us into a great state of excitement.

Human foot-prints!

Yes, there was no mistake about it; there were eight foot-prints in the mud on the banks of the creek, and these were the marks of four men who had been there. They were fresh tracks.

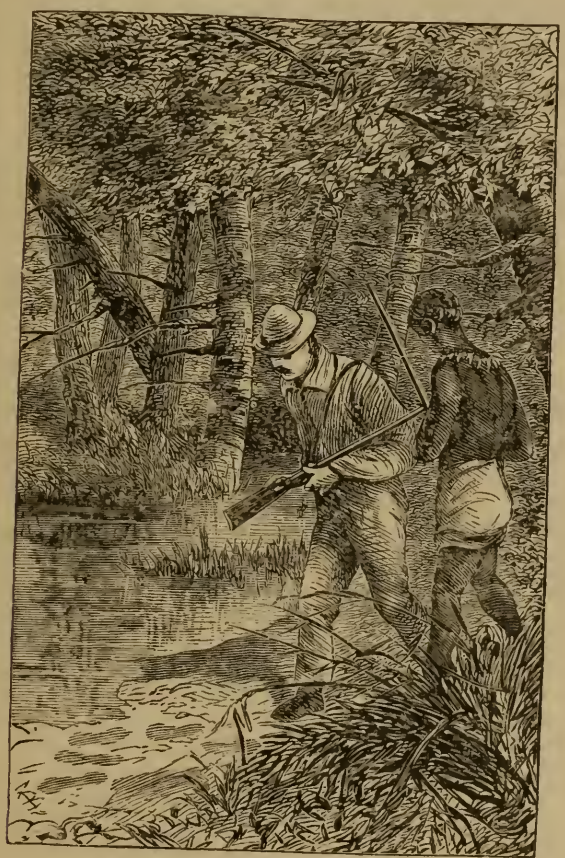
Who were they?

Were they warlike Bakalais of the Ashankolo country? Were they enemies or friends?

Querlaouen and I looked in each other's face without saying a word, and by instinct both of us looked most

carefully at our guns, and we began to mistrust every tree around us, for some one might be hiding behind them, and getting ready to send a bearded spear through us.

We did not like at all the idea of people being in our



WE DISCOVER FOOT-PRINTS.

hunting-ground, but we liked still less the idea that these people might be our enemies.

My pair of revolvers were in good order, and I do not know why, but I always felt very strong and reckless when I had them with the belt holding them round

my waist, and that very morning I felt confident and secure.

After consultation, we concluded that we would follow the foot-prints to the point they had come from, which we did, and at last reached a spot where we saw a small canoe tied to a tree. This canoe certainly did not belong to any people we knew, and consequently must come from some far village situated on the very head-waters of the Ovenga River, and belonged no doubt to those savage and warlike Bakalai inhabiting that wild mountainous region.

Our great object was to prevent them from following our tracks, and thus finding our camp. What was to be done?

Our foot-prints were mixed with theirs, and my shoes had left unmistakable marks of their heels and soles, and I wondered what those fellows would think in seeing them. My only hope was that they would be seized with terror, and that in those marks they might see the tokens of a mighty spirit.

Close by, entering into that creek, there was a beautiful little rivulet of clear water, whose pebbly bed suggested to me that we had better follow its course, and then make a short cut and find our way the best we could.

Another idea occurred to me that Querlaouen and I had better ascend some tree not far off, and wait and see really who these men were.

So we ascended the pebbly stream, leaving no marks behind us, and then made for the forest again, and proceeded almost to the spot where the canoe was. Not far from there were two short trees, the thick foliage of

which would shelter us from any ordinary gaze, and whose heavy limbs would afford us comfortable rest. These two trees were very close together. Querlaouen ascended one, and I ascended the other by the help of the lianas and creepers which hung from their branches to the ground. Our guns were slung on our backs. We never uttered a word, but fixed ourselves as comfortably as we could, and in such manner that we could fire at our enemies if attacked. Malaouen looked at his gun. I did the same, and then petted my two revolvers, as if to say, You, boys, are the good fellows for a true fight.

We were as silent as two statues, waiting patiently for something to turn up.

At last we thought we heard voices in the far distance, which we had at first taken for the chatter of monkeys. The noise came nearer and nearer, and we finally distinguished the sound of human voices.

I got so excited that I could hardly breathe, and every beat of my heart became very distinct.

At last we saw four stalwart fellows, tattooed all over, covered with hunting and war fetiches, armed to the teeth with spears, and two of them carried Ashinga nets, with which they had been hunting on a small scale, and had with them one gazelle (a ncheri).

Suddenly coming to their canoe, they saw Querlaouen's foot-prints, which threw them into a great state of excitement, when one of them pointed to the other, my foot-prints, saying, "What are those marks? they must be the marks of a spirit!" They looked at them, and suddenly an uncontrollable panic seized the four, and they rushed for their canoe, seized their paddles, and went down the

stream with the utmost precipitation, as if fire and brimstone were after them.

In the wink of an eye they were out of sight, and Querlaouen and I came down from our trees. We had not been mistaken. The fellows were Bakalai of the Ashankola country.

It was late in the day, and there was no hope of our reaching our fortified camp before dark. We moved toward it, and at sundown we collected fire-wood, lighted three tremendous piles of it, and soon had splendid fires, cooked the three plantains each of us had for our dinner, and after our meal Malaouen and I had a grand chat.

Querlaouen is a splendid fellow. I love him dearly, and we are sworn friends. I feel that if any one should try to injure or kill him I should fight to the death for him. He is so brave, he is so kind-hearted, such a noble specimen of a savage as we seldom see! I wish I could have only been able to root out of him his belief in witchcraft and fetiches.

Querlaouen then told me his history.

"Chaillee," said he, "my father belonged to a clan which lived in the Ashankolo Mountains, and in his younger days had crossed a large river, called the Ngouyai. He was the chief of a village, and a great warrior. In the country where we lived there was nothing but fighting and fighting; village was against village, and often brother against brother; not a day passed that some one was not killed. You know our mode of warfare; we kill any one, old man, woman, or babe—we have no mercy. One night my father's village was attacked. We fought and fought, and at last repulsed the enemy, who fled in dismay. My father was killed, two

sisters of mine were killed, also several other people of the village. Then we moved toward the banks of the Ovenga; we soon came down the stream, and now I have grown a man, and live where my village is. I only wish you would live all the time among us. We should take such care of you."

After fixing our fires we went to sleep, and early the next morning we made for our camp. We had hardly gone two miles into the woods, when lo! I heard a kind of chuckle which told me that a gorilla was not far off.

The sound came from a densely-wooded and dark ravine, and from the very bottom of it. When we reached the place we found it to be one of those ugly bogs where you go knee-deep into the mud, walking on the roots of trees, and sometimes get stuck fast in this position.

The gorilla was right in the midst of the bog; it was a female, and at every moment we expected to see a large male standing before us, roaring like a demon, and asking us what we came to do in this dark recess of the forest, where it had made its abode with his wife, and perhaps his baby gorilla.

How carefully we looked at our guns! how watchful our eyes were! We were not to be easily surprised. The bog was like one of the worst kind we have in America in the overflowed and woody land of the Western country; only here we have creepers, thorny bushes, and hanging lianas, and grass that cuts like a razor.

We entered the swamp, and went nearer and nearer the sound we had heard first, and came to a dry spot, when lo! we spied a female gorilla and her young baby. The baby was very small, a very dear little baby it was to its mother, for she appeared with her extremely black face,

to look at it with great fondness. I was disarmed; I could not possibly fire. I seemed spell-bound, and could not raise my gun to fire. Yes, there was something too human in that female and her offspring; it hung by her breast, but, unlike our babies, who have to be entirely supported, its little hands clutched its mother's shoulders and helped it to support itself. The little fellow gave a shrill and plaintive cry, and crawled from its mother's arms to her breast to be fed, and the mother lowered her head and looked at her offspring, and with his little fingers he pressed and pressed her breast, so that the milk could come more freely.

On a sudden the mother gave a tremendous cry, and before I knew it she had disappeared through the forest.

I would not have missed this scene for a great deal, and I wish that you had all been with me to see it, for I know that perhaps such scenes may never be seen again by a civilized man; I knew that it had never been seen before. The gorilla will one day disappear. A day will come when he who writes these pages will have been long dead and forgotten, but perhaps the record of what he has seen may, like the record of Hanno, fall into the hands of some one, and it will be read like a strange tale.

I have brought away, altogether, thirty-one gorilla skins and skeletons; I have captured more than a dozen live gorillas, young ones, of course, and, altogether, I must have seen at different times during my twelve years' explorations more than three hundred of them.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

HOW WE WERE RECEIVED AT CAMP.—THREATENED WITH STARVATION.—A NIGHT IN CAMP.—MALAOUEN'S STORY.

We left the gorilla scene I have just described to you in the preceding chapter, and made for our camp. As we came in sight of it Querlaouen gave the peculiar whistle agreed upon to announce our arrival, and soon after we saw the head of Gambo and Malaouen peeping out above the fence, also the heads of the two boys Njali and Nola.

The ladder was handed down to us; soon we were inside, and, before I knew it, Malaouen was hugging me as hard as he could; when he had done, and before I had time to breathe and free myself from his embrace entirely, I was hugged by friend Gambo. The boys jumped around, and there was tremendous excitement in the camp. The poor fellows had been very anxious, and did not know what had become of us. When night came they became very uneasy; perhaps we had been killed by the Ashankolo Bakalai, or by some wild beasts.

Gambo, looking with pride into Malaouen's face, said, "Did I not tell you that they would come back all safe?" They were washed with the chalk of the Alumbi, covered with their fetiches, and had gone through all sorts of heathen ceremonies to find out whether we were safe. The little wooden idol of Gambo had also been consult-

ed. Gambo is a celebrated doctor who can tell future events; and, as a proof, he pointed us to his friend, shouting, "Did I not tell you that they would return safely?"

Both Gambo and Malaouen had been looking at us with keen eyes upon our arrival, to know if we had come with a well-provided larder, and seemed somewhat disappointed when they saw us empty-handed, for they had fancied us coming back with a fat monkey or a nice gazelle.

There was nothing in the camp. with the exception of the nchombi and ncheri gazelles which we had kept alive, and these I did not wish to kill then. So we concluded that Gambo and the two boys should go to a secluded plantation belonging to Malaouen and gather plantains, while Malaouen, Querlaouen, and myself would go hunting and try to kill a wild boar. It was the season when these latter were splendid eating. In the mean time we would collect nuts and live upon them; if we could not find these, we would then quietly starve, waiting for Gambo and the boys with their plantains.

We all bade good-by to friend Gambo, and to Njali and Nola, wishing them good luck and plenty of nuts on the road to fill their empty stomachs; and as they disappeared they reciprocated our wishes about the nuts, and we had a jolly laugh.

After Gambo's departure we held a great council, and agreed that we had better empty the little creek we had dammed to prevent the fish from going out, and see if we would meet with good fortune there. So we took our kettle with us, and every thing else that could draw water, and started, leaving our camp entirely unprotect-

ARRIVAL AT THE STOCKADE.

ed. I need not tell you that we had our guns, and plenty of powder, shot, and bullets.

It was no small work to empty this creek or little pond, I can assure you. For hours we went on dipping our kettles and baskets and throwing the water out, until at last the water became shallow, and we could see great quantities of ground fish, called *niozi*, together with other large ones whose names I forget. These niozi are splendid little fishes, and the natives think a great deal of them. In the dry season a great many are caught, and they are smoked and kept for hard times.

We made a bountiful harvest, and had to make baskets with the branches of trees in order to carry our loads to the camp. Then we lighted fires under our oralas to smoke the fish, and after cooking we ate some of them.

We had had a grand success with the fish, and now we determined to try our hands at a wild boar hunt, which is certainly one of the most difficult, for the wild boar is very shy in these forests; but when fat, the animal is the nicest game one can kill, for the flesh is very savory and delicious.

And successful we were. Two large enormous wild boars were bagged, one of them by myself—a splendid fellow, weighing several hundred pounds. We were very thankful that these two fellows were killed within about two miles from the camp. We disemboweled them, cut their hind and fore quarters apart, and the rest of the body in large pieces, and brought the meat to the camp. We had to make several journeys, till I began to feel so tired that I wished the boar meat anywhere else, but we must make hay while the sun shines.

In the evening we had bright fires under the oralas

This is the way to smoke meat here: we boil the meat for a short time, and then put it over the fire on the oralas, and leave it there until it is perfectly smoked.

What a splendid flavor, and how nice the meat would have been if we could only have some plantains to eat with it! When is Gambo coming? How near is he on the road? Have the elephants or gorillas destroyed the plantation of plantain-trees where they have gone? Such were the questions we asked ourselves. People can not live on fish and meat alone. That evening we fed on boar's meat, thankful for having been so successful.

The next morning the voice, or rather the peculiar whistle agreed upon outside, told us that Gambo had come. I was the first to peep my head above the fence, when I saw friend Gambo and Njali and Nola loaded with plantain and cassada, and we gave them a grand hurrah of welcome.

I wish you could have seen the face of Gambo as he looked at the wild-boar meat which was being smoked; he was tremendously hungry, he said, as soon as he saw the meat. So we prepared food ourselves for them, as we wanted them to rest, they looked so tired. They ate such quantities of wild boar! I was glad they had brought some Cayenne pepper with them and some lemons. I had some salt, but no one could take any without my permission.

We remained in the camp all day, lying down on our beds of leaves and taking naps from time to time, my men meanwhile smoking their pipes and telling stories. Gambo swore that he saw a ghost, a real evil spirit, and they all believed it except myself. We had a grand

time listening to Gambo's stories. The boys swore that what Gambo said was all true. They had seen the ghost too.

If you could have had a peep at us, you would have seen us inside of our fortress by the side of a bright fire round our orala, enjoying and warming ourselves. We were perfectly happy; how the men seemed to enjoy their smoke of tobacco! Malaouen had been collecting some palm wine, and each of them had had a good draught of the beverage—the empty calabash was now lying by their side.

Our nchombi and ncheri were getting somewhat tame, and were lying on the ground not far from us. They had got accustomed to the fire and to ourselves. Our dogs were there also; the poor fellows had had a hard fare of late.

Each one of us had one hand resting on his gun, which was supported by a forked stick, stuck in the ground for that purpose, and our hunting-bag was hung by the side of the gun. In our bags we had each of us a flask full of powder, two or three scores of bullets, and shot of two or three sizes. We could seize all these in an instant, if danger were to threaten us. In such a wild country people must never fancy themselves secure, and must be always ready for any emergency, for any fighting against the savages, or against the attacks of the ferocious leopard; and I got so accustomed to carry arms that I never left my gun by itself if I went anywhere, however short the distance might be; my revolvers, of course, hanging always by my side.

I was dressed with the clothes I had made from the skins of wild animals. I wish I could have gone into

the woods like my men, that is to say, with almost nothing to cover them.

If you could have had a peep at us, you would have seen us as I have just been describing ourselves to you; and I have no doubt many of you would have been glad to join our party. I love to look back upon those days. It was a wild life indeed, one that no civilized man had led before me, for no one had ever gone into such a country.

Friend Malaouen then told us the story of a leopard, and began thus:

"When I was a boy our clan lived on the banks of the Rembo Ngouyai, a river which flows the other side of the Ashankolo Mountains, and which you have not seen, Chaillee.

"The village where my parents lived was very large, and, as the people were always at war, it was fenced about. While there, one of our men disappeared, and was changed into a leopard. From that time people from time to time began to disappear; they were carried away by that leopard, and we could only see the clots of blood left behind, but could not trace them into the woods. We were afraid—for nothing is so terrible as a leopard that was once a man. No spear can go through him, no trap can ever catch him, and woe to the man who ever tries to face the beast;" and, as Malaouen said this, his face and that of Querlaouen and Gambo contracted themselves with fear; their superstitions were very strong, and overcame the great courage they possessed. I could hear distinctly the breathing of each man, as by instinct each seized his gun near by.

Then Malaouen continued:

"One day several women had gone to the plantation with me, and as we returned to the village, it was just getting dark, when lo! I heard a tremendous, a fearful scream from the woman ahead of me, and I had just time to see through the darkness a tremendous leopard carrying her away into the woods. We all shouted, but in vain. All became silent; the leopard had disappeared with its prey. Fear seized upon us, and we made off for the village with the utmost speed.

"When we brought the news, there was great consternation and wailing, for the woman who had been taken away was very beautiful.

"The next day we danced round the mbuiti, and the mbuiti told us that we should kill the leopard.

"So thirty men prepared themselves for the hunt. We cooked the war dish, bled our hands, covered ourselves with our war fetiches, marked our bodies with the ochre of the Alumbi, invoked the spirits of our ancestors to be with us, and departed.

"The day before some people came to the place where they had seen the leopard's foot-prints, and not far off was a tremendous jungle, very thick, and several trees had been brought down by a tornado. The leopard's lair was there.

"At last we came round the lair. Some said the leopard was not there, while others said he was. In the mean time we shouted, and all the time our spears were in readiness, and the dogs were barking, we had a hope that it would spring on one of them, then we would transpierce it with our spears.

"When a man who said the leopard was not there first entered the jungle, he had hardly made a step into

it, when lo! a terrible cry sprung from among us. The leopard, which was probably watching, with a tremendous leap sprung on the intruder, his claws fastened deeply into his shoulder, and the teeth of his powerful jaws holding the neck of the man, who uttered a fearful shriek. In less time than I can tell you the leopard was covered with the spears that had gone through him; he dropped down dead with the man whom he had killed."

They all shouted, "Yes, this leopard had been once a man who was possessed with witchcraft."

My breath was becoming short with excitement, and I was glad when the story was over, for the sweat was fast coming down from my face.

We turned the meat on the other side on the orala, and left our three native dogs, Kambi, Goa and Andeko, to take care of the premises (they were now lying by the fires, enjoying the heat thoroughly), and then we went to sleep.

During the night I woke, thinking I heard a booming sound like that of heavy footsteps, when the dogs began to bark, and soon I heard a crash through the forest. It was a herd of elephants which was wandering not far from us, and then the forest resumed its wonted stillness.

Now I had remained a long time at the head-waters of the Ovenga—a long time has gone by since the last chapter. Months had been spent in that region, and I thought now of descending the river to visit my settlement of Washington on the sea-side. It was high time. I was still suffering from fever attacks, and had not quinine enough left for a large dose.

Not only was I sick, but also poor and ragged. My

clothes were torn and patched, and I looked in reality very little better than my negro friends. My stock of powder was small, my bullets were nearly exhausted, and my small shot were almost gone. I was wearing my last pair of shoes. My goods were all gone, and skins of animals made a great part of my garments.

The numerous hardships of this long trip; the sleeping night after night in wet clothes; the tramping through rain, through rivers, and under the hot sun; the sufferings from the intolerable *gouamba*, and the still less tolerable starvation; the attacks of fever that followed one upon the other — all these had done their work upon me. Food had been scarce, very scarce for a long time, and I began to feel as if I wanted a long rest. I wanted to breathe the salt air; I wanted to see the deep blue sea, and to look at the waves which came in heavy surfs upon the beach; I wanted to see that sea on which I expected to sail one day for home.

Do you not think that I deserved to go back? I had worked hard, very hard. I had made beautiful collections; and I was to carry with me gorillas, hippopotami, manitee, nshiego-mbouvé, kooloo-kamba, no end of birds (more than two thousand), a great many monkeys, and the skins of several hundreds of animals. I had worked hard to kill them, and worked still harder to stuff them, hunting them during the day, and preparing their skins during the night. So I told friend Quengueza we must go.

I called the Bakalai together and told friend Obindji that his Ntangani must leave him. As soon as I said this, the old chief said, "Neshi (no). What will Obindji do without his Ntangani?" They all shouted, "What shall

we do without our Ntangani?" The women shouted, "Chaillee, you must not go!"

Gambo, Malaouen, and Querlaouen made long faces and were sad, for we had a real affection for each other, we were such great friends, and how could it be otherwise? We had braved danger together; we had gone through hardships and starvation together; many and many a night had we spent together in the forest. Of any wild animal they killed I was sure to have a piece; the best plantains were sure to be mine; the nicest fishes their women caught they brought to me. How kind they were to me, how gentle! No children could have been more docile, and yet how fierce, how brave, when the day of battle or of danger came!

I was sorry to leave, for I had come to love these wild men who had never seen a white man before. I had also a kind of affection for the country, where, in the discovery of new and strange animals, I had enjoyed one of the greatest pleasures a naturalist can have. The rough life was forgotten when I looked at my precious collections, and the thought of a gorilla even now enabled me to shake off the fever, and gave strength to my feeble limbs.

Quengueza, too, was tired of bush life, and had several times sworn that he had never known a man like me; that he could not understand what was moving me; that I had a heart of njego (leopard). His Majesty called those Bakalais his bushmen, and to whatever village he would set his foot he had a right at once to at least a wife.

Quengueza is the best friend I ever had in Africa, indeed one of the best friends I ever had anywhere. This

GOOD-BYE TO THE BAKALAIS.

old and powerful chief—the dread in his younger days of all the tribes around—the man whom every body respected, the man whose word was law, was gentle with me, was kind to me, and never did a single mean thing, never took any advantage of me; and whatever I said was sure to be attended to, if possible.

Going to a hunt, his last words were always to those who went with me, "Take care of my white man;" and, as he often said, if he had been a young man he would have gone with us. Every fowl or goat he had he gave to me, every bit of game his slaves or his friends killed for him was mine, and when we travelled in company we always ate together, and we always managed to make a pleasant table. For I wanted to show these people the difference between civilized and savage life, and Quengueza always ate with a fork and on a plate. I love old Quengueza, and it makes me happy to think that he knows I love him.

As we were preparing to go, my Bakalai friends came in with presents of provisions. Baskets of cassava, smoked-boar hams, smoked fishes, sweet potatoes, were brought as free-will offerings.

Malaouen, Gambo, and Querlaouen were always near me, their wives came every day to see me, and their children were always around me. All the Bakalai seemed to me to be kinder than ever.

Good Obindji seemed so sorry! The evening before my departure I called him into my hut and gave him a nice coat and a red cap, which I had kept especially for him, and to his head wife I gave a necklace of large beads. I did not forget friends Malaouen, Gambo, and Querlaouen.

When the morning arrived, our canoes were on the beach. I was on the shore ready to embark; Obindji stood near me; every woman and man brought to me a parting gift. I was very much touched by their simple ways.

When all was ready for a start, Macondai, my boy, fired a gun, and then I swung the American flag to the breeze, the first time that it or any other flag of a civilized nation was over these waters. The people shouted, and we were off; and as we glided down, and before we disappeared by the bend of the river, I saw Obindji's hand waving farewell to me.

Presently several miles down the stream we passed Querlaouen's plantation. He and his kind wife and their children stood on the shore and beckoned me to stop. We paddled in, and the good fellow silently put into my canoe another smoked-boar ham, while his wife gave me a great basket of sweet potatoes. As we started away again, the wife shouted, "When you come back bring me some beads." The children cried out, "When you come back bring us some clothes." But old Querlaouen stood still and silent, like a black statue, until, by a turn of the river, he was lost to our sight.

Quengueza accompanied me to Washington and Biagano, and all of the Goumbi people that had canoes accompanied us, beating tam-tams, singing songs, and firing guns as we descended the stream.

Quengueza was bringing back safely to Ranpano his friend Chaillee. At last we reached the place where the old bamboo house was, and the whole population turned out to receive me, headed by King Ranpano and old Rinkimongani, my housekeeper, and brother to the

King. I found my house undisturbed, all my valuables and goods safe, and my live stock on hand and in good condition, and made old Rinkimongani very proud by expressing my satisfaction. He said, "Now you tell me what I stole?" And King Ranpano exclaimed, "Ah! we don't steal from our white man. We are people, we have a heart that feels, we love our white man, for he is the first that ever came to live among us."

And now I must say good-by again to you; and I wish that, in reading this book, you may think that you have been travelling with me for a while in the great forests of the Equatorial regions of Africa. I have many more things to say to you, but will wait for another year before I do so.

I hope that I have been able to instruct as well as to amuse you, and that, as the years go by, and you become men and women, you may remember some of the stories I have told you. Some of you, no doubt, have seen me, while others do not know me. My great wish is that you may think kindly of me, and remember him who will always be happy to call himself the boys' and girls' friend.

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